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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 30 | Min 22 | Humidity 65% Mostly cloudy Sensex 76,802 | Nifty 24,013 | Gold 1,47,321 | Silver 2,33,693 | Dollar 94.28 | Euro 108.13 | GBP 124.72

LOG-IN TROUBLE

Police, forest dept personnel express concerns over digital attendance system as app is ill-suited to field officers' realities

PAGE 5

PIECE OF CAKE

Honey cakes and khara buns: A walk through memory lane where aroma from Iyengar bakeries remind you of Bengaluru

PAGE 7

Even as WHO has declared loneliness an urgent global health threat, many in city report trouble making true friends after 25 as work pressure, long commutes, isolated living situations and screen heavy routines limit social time

LONELY HEARTS CLUB

Hobby-based communities emerge as alternative social spaces

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As the tech city thrives through more technology and hustle by the day, many adults in the city share that finding friends post 25 can feel surprisingly difficult. While some do find their routes, others struggle to make friends even in this age of social media.

India is ranked as the second loneliest country in the world with a composite loneliness score of 89, and in metro cities like Bengaluru, almost 60 percent of those surveyed are known to report loneliness as long commutes, isolated living situations and screen heavy routines limit social time..

Despite living in large, multi generational households, or coming from one, studies claim that 58% of Indians report feeling lonely and up to 7 in 10 young adults experience chronic isolation. As per the World Health Organisation, loneliness is an urgent global health threat, as it carries a 29% increased risk of early death which is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

While the city continues to attract young professionals from across the country and the globe, many residents feel that building meaningful friendships can get harder as hustle and bustle constantly takes over.

"Online interactions give a kind of closeness but it doesn't always meet the deeper emotional side like trust, a willingness to be exposed and actual support that sticks around

—Dr. Sachin Baliga, psychiatrist

"I have been in Bengaluru for almost a decade now, I have met some amazing people but I can't necessarily call them friends; more like acquaintances at this point. Many are obsessed with social media and monetary status; it is a fashion statement to speak, be and earn a certain way, which has further demotivated me, as I feel it tends to be superficial and there is no point in having another mask on, with the one I already have," said Satvik, a 26-year-old

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

What about passive drink driving?

Research introduces new concept that puts focus on risks faced by passengers travelling along with a tipsy person behind the wheel

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In a first-of-its-kind study published in the journal BMC Public Health has drawn attention to the dangers faced by passengers travelling with intoxicated drivers, introducing the concept of "passive drink driving" in the Indian context. The study, titled 'From Drivers to Passengers: Concept of Passive Drink Driving and Need for Passenger-Centric Interventions to Reduce Drink-Driving in Bengaluru City, India', calls for greater awareness and targeted interventions aimed at passengers, not just drivers.

The study was conducted across Bengaluru in March 2023 as part of a cross-sectional drink-driving assessment covering 48 police station jurisdictions. Researchers randomly screened 10,810 drivers and riders through alcohol breath testing. Of these, 320 drivers were found to have a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) exceeding the legal limit of 30 mg per 100 ml of blood.

Among the 10,810 vehicles stopped for checks, 5,624 vehicles (52%) had at least one passenger in addition to the driver. Researchers recorded a total of 11,468 passengers travelling in these vehicles, including 602 child passengers in 458 vehicles.

According to the research paper, research from India is limited on passenger fatalities attributed to drink-driving. "Alcohol directly contributes to road crashes

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Harmony unplugged

Music lovers can look forward to the Nadasurabhi June Concert featuring noted Carnatic vocalist Nisha Rajagopalan and accompanying artistes. **Where: St. John's Medical College Campus, Koramangala; When: June 21, 4.15 pm**

02 Visual voices

To mark the 75th birth anniversary of renowned cartoonist Maya Kamath, the Indian Institute of Cartoonists is hosting an exhibition of 150 international cartoons from the International Maya Kamath Memorial Cartoon Contest 2026, themed on gender equality and women's rights.
Where: Indian Cartoon Gallery, Midford Garden Road; When: Running until June 27, 10 am to 6 pm

03 Nature therapy

To mark International Yoga Day, Hosachiguru will host Yoga Day at a Farm. The wellness experience will combine yoga amid nature with an opportunity to reconnect with the outdoors in a serene farm setting. **Where: Maamara Farm, Ramanagara; When: June 21, 7.30 am**

04 Verse voyage

Poet and artist Eva Garg will be the featured performer at Tuesdays. The event, recognised in the Limca Book of Records as India's longest-running poetry event. **Where: Urban Solace, Ulsoor; When: June 23, 7.30 pm to 9 pm**

05 Healthy boundaries

Urban Solace will host a boundary-setting workshop for working professionals. The session will explore challenges in saying no, recognising boundary triggers and building assertive communication skills through practical exercises and real-life scenarios. Facilitated by three Master's students in Psychological Counselling from Surana College, Kengeri. **Where: Urban Solace, Ulsoor; When: June 21, 11 am to 1 pm**

Stormy surprise darkens Bengaluru ahead of solstice

Thick storm clouds turned City's afternoon into twilight, visibility dropped sharply, rain followed, disrupting movement across neighbourhoods as summer solstice approached

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Bengaluru witnessed an unusual weather event on Friday as thick storm clouds dimmed daylight across large parts of the city around 4 pm, just a day before the summer solstice, when the city is expected to experience one of its longest daylight periods of the year.

Residents across several neighbourhoods reported conditions resembling late evening as dark clouds rapidly gathered over the city, reducing visibility and triggering rainfall in many areas. The contrast was striking, as Bengaluru was otherwise set to receive nearly 13 hours of daylight due to seasonal changes associated with the summer solstice on June 21.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the sudden change in conditions was linked to active weather systems influencing Karnataka and neighbouring regions. A trough extending from East Uttar Pradesh to Coastal Andhra Pradesh through parts of Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha and Chhattisgarh remains active, while another trough persists over the Bay of Bengal. Upper-air cyclonic circulations over north Kerala and the Lakshadweep region have also contributed to unstable weather conditions across southern India.

The IMD has forecast light to moderate rainfall in Bengaluru Urban and Bengaluru Rural districts over the next few days, with cloudy skies likely during the afternoons and evenings. Over the next 24 to 48 hours, the city is expected to witness partly cloudy conditions turning generally cloudy towards evening, accompanied by light to moderate rain at isolated locations. Temperatures are expected to remain around 29°C during the day and 21°C at night.

The weather department has also issued a thunderstorm warning for parts of North Interior Karnataka, where gusty winds of 30–40 kmph are likely on June 20 and June 21. Hot and humid conditions are expected to persist in isolated pockets of North Interior Karnataka over the next two days. Meteorologists said the dark afternoon witnessed in Bengaluru resulted from dense rain-bearing cloud formations blocking sunlight across large sections of the city.

Meteorological department predicts continued showers across Bengaluru, temperature steadies around 29°C, with humid conditions, isolated rainfall, and monsoon progression strengthening across Karnataka coastal and interior belts

Across Karnataka, rainfall activity is expected to increase as conditions become favourable for the further advance of the southwest monsoon into additional parts of the country over the coming days. Coastal districts, including Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada, have been placed under a heavy rain forecast from June 21 to June 24. Heavy rainfall is also likely in parts of Malnad, including Kodagu, Hassan, Chikkamagaluru and Shivamogga districts, on June 22 and June 23.

Heavy rainfall floods basements, disrupts traffic in Whitefield

Following heavy rainfall in the city, basements in several apartment complexes across Whitefield were flooded, causing inconvenience to residents and damage to parked vehicles. Waterlogged roads were reported in several areas, leading to severe traffic congestion and slow-moving traffic. Pedestrians found it difficult to navigate the flooded streets, while motorists struggled to drive through submerged stretches, resulting in lengthy delays and difficult commuting conditions across the locality.

While such conditions are not uncommon during the monsoon season, the timing was noteworthy, as it occurred on the eve of the year's longest day, briefly turning a bright June afternoon into near-night conditions.

School run turns into risky road run

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A group of parents has written to the administration of St Joseph's Boys' High School and St Joseph's Pre-University College, expressing concern about the safety of their children while crossing the busy road during peak hours to reach the opposite side of Museum Road. The letter highlights traffic congestion and concerns over students' safety.

"We, a group of concerned parents of students studying at St Joseph's Boys' High School (SJBHS) and St Joseph's Pre-University College (SJPUC), wish to bring to your attention the serious traffic and pedestrian safety issues faced by students during the morning school hours. Every day, hundreds of children are required to cross busy roads around the school premises. The continuous flow of vehicles from Museum Road and Residency Road, coupled with the absence of a pedestrian traffic signal, makes crossing the road extremely difficult and dangerous for students," the letter states.

The parents said that, in addition, footpaths intended for pedestrians are frequently used by two-wheelers, particularly delivery personnel from various service providers. "This further compromises the safety of children walking to and from the school gates. Some of the major concerns observed are the absence of a pedestrian crossing signal near the school entrances, continuous vehicular movement with limited opportunities for students to cross safely, a lack of dedicated traffic police personnel during peak school hours, and the encroachment of footpaths by two-wheelers," the letter states.

The parents said they had noticed several instances of students being intimidated, brushed against, or nearly struck by moving vehicles while crossing the road, posing a high risk of serious accidents involving schoolchildren.

"Considering the large number of students attending both institutions, we respectfully request the management to coordinate with the Bengaluru Traffic Police and the relevant civic authorities to implement urgent safety measures. Specifically, we request consideration of a foot overbridge (FOB) near the school entrances, the installation of a pedestrian traffic signal and zebra crossing, the deployment of traffic police personnel during school opening and closing hours, and strict enforcement against vehicles and two-wheelers using pedestrian footpaths," the letter states.

Speaking to Bangalore Mirror, Gerald Lourdusamy, a parent, said that his son is a student at St Joseph's PU College. "There is a lot of traffic during peak hours. It would greatly help students if the authorities constructed a foot overbridge near St. Joseph's PU College," he said. Another parent, Iftekar Ahmed, said that students were finding it difficult to cross the road because of the heavy traffic on Museum Road.

"I want the authorities to construct a foot overbridge to enable students to reach the other side of the road safely," he said.

Students crossing the road near St. Joseph's PU College

Varthur STP tragedy: One body recovered

The search and rescue operation at the Belagere sewage treatment plant (STP) in Varthur entered its third consecutive day on Saturday, following the incident in which two BWSSB workers fell into a 40-foot-deep tank on Thursday evening. One body was recovered in the early hours of Saturday during the ongoing operation by rescue teams.

Officials identified the deceased as Akilan Mohan (30), a native of Tamil Nadu, who went missing after falling into the tank. Rescue teams retrieved the body around 3 am during a joint NDRF and Fire and Emergency Services operation amid toxic gas and low visibility conditions. Efforts continue to trace the second worker, Brijesh Kumar from Bihar, while Karthik survived. Police probe safety lapses at the BWSSB facility and the government announced ₹10 lakh compensation. —BMB

CRIME FILES

Teen dies during phone snatching escape

An 18-year-old youth died while allegedly attempting to flee after snatching a mobile phone in the Halasuru Gate police station limits of Bengaluru, police said. Police identified the deceased Junaid and arrested accomplice Arbaaz, 23. Incident occurred 5.30 pm June 15 Kabbanpet. Duo rode scooter snatched pedestrian phone tried escape. Viral video shows chase; labourer threw sack at vehicle causing skid. Both abandoned scooter and ran. Junaid collapsed after 250 metres near parked motorcycle. He had heart ailments and stent procedure. The further investigation is ongoing. —BMB

Traffic advisory for today

The Bengaluru Traffic Police have issued a public advisory ahead of multiple large-scale events scheduled across the city on June 21, including International Yoga Day celebrations, marathon events and major political programmes. According to the advisory, authorities will implement traffic restrictions and diversions around key venues to ensure smooth conduct, warning congestion in several parts due to simultaneous events.

NEET candidates should start early, monitor updates and reach centre on time.. —BMB

Fruit vendor dies amid harassment claims

A 40-year-old fruit vendor allegedly died by suicide in Channasandra under the Kadugodi police limits, reportedly after facing harassment and financial pressure from individuals who threatened to implicate him in a case under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Papanna, a resident of Channasandra, recorded a video message before his death, accusing Nayana and others of repeatedly demanding money and threatening an SC/ST Act case unless he paid ₹10 lakh.

Earlier, he said he faced a similar case in 2021 settled after payment and described himself as sole earning member, urging protection for his family and dependents. He alleged continuous pressure and said repeated threats and monetary demands left him distressed, stating that he had no option but to speak out through the recorded message video message. —BMB

Hit-and-run: Lorry crushes man crossing road

A Rajasthan-based cab driver was killed after being hit by a lorry while crossing Old Madras Road late on Thursday night under the limits of KR Puram Traffic Police Station.

Police said the accident took place around 11.40 pm near Bhattarahalli when Ganesh Singh (31), a resident of HSR Layout originally from Rajasthan, was crossing the road.

Passers-by helped rush him to a nearby private hospital in an ambulance, where doctors declared him brought dead.

KR Puram Traffic Police have registered a case and are searching for the absconding lorry driver and the vehicle involved, while reviewing CCTV footage from the accident spot.

Further investigation is underway as police verify additional leads and examine surrounding surveillance footage carefully now ongoing to identify the lorry and establish exact sequence of events. —BMB

Police inspector among 3 arrested for dacoity

Bengaluru Police have arrested three persons, including a serving police inspector, in connection with a dacoity case involving the alleged robbery of ₹20 lakh from a Kerala-based man under Madiwala police limits.

Complainant Junish Babu A K, 40, son of Muhammad Muhin and a native of Kerala, approached the Madiwala Police Station in the early hours of June 19, reporting the incident. He stated that he arrived in Bengaluru on June 15 with two friends and stayed at White Stone Lodge in Madiwala. Junish alleged his friend Naveen introduced him into a trading investment scheme promising high returns and he bought Rs 20 lakh in cash to the city trusting the assurance. The accused allegedly conspired, assaulted him and robbed the money. Police arrested Kupendra Reddy, Vasanth Kumar and CID Police inspector Mahesh Kanakagiri during the investigation. Investigation continues to trace associates and recover the cash, police said. —BMB

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Blue Line metro delay extends commuters' traffic nightmare

BMRCL targets October trial runs despite construction bottlenecks, but mandatory testing and approvals could postpone passenger services by several months

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Thousands of tech professionals working along the Outer Ring Road (ORR) corridor will have to wait longer for a metro commute, with trial runs on Namma Metro's Blue Line now expected to begin only in October 2026. The revised timeline has disappointed commuters who were hoping for relief from long hours spent in traffic between KR Pura, Marathahalli, Bellandur and Silk Board. With commercial operations expected several months after trial runs begin, many office-goers may have to wait until mid-2027 before trains start carrying passengers.

The delay was flagged by the Mahadevapura Task Force, which said it has repeatedly highlighted bottlenecks affecting the project. The citizen group estimated that every day of delay results in an economic loss of more than ₹4 crore and urged the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) to accelerate pending works. It also called for round-the-clock execution and countdown displays at major project locations to monitor progress.

Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byregowda acknowledged that work on the 19.75-km Reach 2A corridor between KR Pura and Central Silk Board is progressing slowly at two to three stations. He said officials have been directed to ensure trial runs begin by October on completed portions of the corridor, even if work continues at some stations.

Safety clearances and inspections remain crucial before passenger operations begin

"Except for a few stations where work is moving slowly, trial runs should start by October. Marathahalli station is one of the locations where construction is taking longer. We have suggested exploring phased trial runs between KR Pura and Marathahalli and between Marathahalli and HSR Layout," the minister said.

He added that officials had cited technical challenges but have been instructed to speed up construction and consider round-the-clock work if necessary to meet the October deadline. Even after trial runs begin, passengers may have to wait several more months before services become operational. According to BMRCL officials, the corridor must undergo train and subsystem trials, testing of track alignment, traction and communication systems, speed certification by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO), signalling validation, and safety clearances, including inspection by the Commissioner of Metro Railway Safety (CMRS). The approval process could take another five to six months.

Byregowda also said the KR Pura-Hebbal section of the Blue Line faces engineering and operational challenges and is likely to be completed only by December 2027. On the 26-km Hebbal-Airport corridor under Phase 2B, officials have indicated a target of June 2027. "Definitely, this is not as easy as I say. Let me admit that a minimum delay of two years has become an institutional culture. Yet, we will take all possible steps to bring this into reality," he said.

> **"Except for a few stations where work is moving slowly, trial runs should start by October. Marathahalli station is one of the locations where construction is taking longer. We have suggested exploring phased trial runs between KR Pura and Marathahalli and between Marathahalli and HSR Layout**
> – Krishna Byregowda, Bengaluru Development Minister

Walk in street locked, commuters demand access

Once-bustling leisure destination now stands deserted as legal dispute delays reopening and raises concerns over public space use

Closure affected businesses and pedestrian access in equal measure

The Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has shut down and sealed the popular "Walk in Street" commercial hub in Indiranagar after the operator allegedly failed to comply with the terms of its licence agreement, including payment of licence fees.

Located beneath the Namma Metro viaduct near Indiranagar Metro station, the pedestrian-friendly space had emerged as a major attraction, particularly among young residents drawn by its cafés, restaurants, open-air seating and vibrant décor. The venue also gained significant attention on social media, becoming one of the city's most recognisable leisure destinations.

The two-storey complex, owned by BMRCL, had been licensed to a private operator, which further leased portions of the property to eateries and advertising firms. Metro authorities reportedly acted after repeated instances of non-compliance with licence conditions. Officials said the agreement with the operator has been terminated and the matter is now before a court.

The closure has left the once-busy venue deserted, with visitors arriving to find locked gates and restricted access. BMRCL has not announced whether the space will reopen. Sources indicated that a fresh tender for the property can be issued only after ongoing legal proceedings are resolved. The shutdown has reignited discussions about the use of public land beneath metro infrastructure. While many viewed the project as a successful urban gathering space, some civic activists argued that such areas should prioritise public use over commercial activities. The closure has also triggered criticism from pedestrians, who say the decision has affected not only businesses but also pedestrian access. In a post on X, Shreedhar Manek called the shutdown "yet another example of how BMRCL does not prioritise citizens in its decision making."

> **"I understand if commercial reasons forced BMRC to shut #1, but if it had cared enough about pedestrians, it would still have kept the path open to people to walk through and reach their destinations with a bit more ease** – In a post on X, Shreedhar Manek

While acknowledging that the Metro agency may have had commercial reasons for sealing the facility after the operator allegedly failed to pay licence fees, Manek argued that the public walkway should have remained accessible. "I understand if commercial reasons forced BMRC to shut #1, but if it had cared enough about pedestrians, it would still have kept the path open to people to walk through and reach their destinations with a bit more ease," he wrote. Manek said Walk in Street served a dual purpose. Besides becoming "a good public place that people could visit and spend some time on a weekend", it enabled pedestrians to bypass the congested KFC Junction and access the Indiranagar Metro station more conveniently.

"After all, BMRC is taxpayer funded and its foremost mandate is to make the lives of citizens easier," he said. **— BMB**

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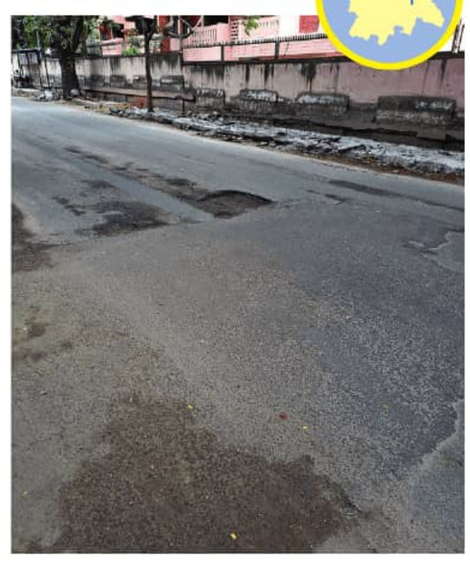
Urban eyesore

Pulikeshinagar

Garbage, construction debris and exposed electrical wires have remained unattended on a footpath along Haines Road in Pulikeshinagar for nearly two years.

Repair needed

Taralabalu Road



The deteriorating condition of Taralabalu Road leading to Mekhri Circle is causing inconvenience to commuters and raising safety concerns, highlighting the need for urgent repairs.

Pothole peril

Koramangala

A newly formed pothole on a recently tarred road in Koramangala is posing a risk to motorists and causing near-misses for two-wheeler riders.

Love, marriage and the prenup question

From celebrity romances to changing social norms, prenuptial agreements spark fresh debate as experts push for legal reforms and clearer marital safeguards

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The recent discussions surrounding global pop star Taylor Swift and reports of prenuptial agreements in celebrity relationships have once again brought the concept of prenups into the spotlight. Commonly used in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, a prenuptial agreement, or prenup, is a legal contract signed before marriage that outlines how finances, assets and responsibilities will be handled during the marriage and in the event of a separation. While prenups have become increasingly accepted in several parts of the world, they remain largely unenforceable under Indian matrimonial law, where marriage is traditionally viewed as a sacred social and religious institution rather than a contractual arrangement. As changing lifestyles, rising financial independence and increasing divorce rates reshape societal attitudes, legal experts believe the conversation around prenups is becoming more relevant in India. Younger generations are increasingly open to discussing finances, personal

Advocates argue formal pre-marriage contracts could improve accountability, protect vulnerable parties and streamline dispute resolution, though concerns persist over enforcement

expectations and future responsibilities before marriage, prompting renewed calls for a legal framework that recognises such agreements. However, opinions remain divided over whether prenups would strengthen relationships through transparency or weaken trust by introducing contractual terms into a personal relationship. Advocate Omran Khan, Partner at LegalCook Advocates & Solicitors, explains that a prenuptial agreement is "a contract entered into by a couple before marriage. It serves as a blueprint or roadmap for how they intend to lead their lives together based on mutual understanding, and it defines the agreed terms should they choose to end the marriage."

Speaking about the lack of legal recognition in India, Khan says, "Currently, prenups are not legally recognised under Indian matrimonial laws. This is because Indian society, culture and personal laws view marriage as a sacred social or religious union rather than a mere contract. Traditional family rituals and cultural values do not naturally accommodate these agreements. However, as society evolves and modernises, the younger generation, particularly Gen Z, is increasingly leaning towards these flexible, individualised arrangements to protect their preferences and beliefs."

Khan advocated dedicated legislation recognising prenuptial agreements, saying it would modernise India's legal framework alongside fast-track divorce courts. He argued that prenups encourage transparency by helping couples discuss finances, future plans and expectations before marriage. However, he said prenups would not necessarily reduce litigation, as disputes over their terms would still require judicial intervention. Khan also stressed that such agreements are not limited to the wealthy and can be used by couples across all socio-economic backgrounds. If legalised, he said strong statutory safeguards would be needed to prevent exploitation, protect women and children, penalise breaches and ensure confidence in the arrangement.

Check-in rules leave frontliners fuming

Kartavya sparks concerns as uniformed services warn rigid digital monitoring ignores unpredictable deployments, connectivity gaps and exhausting schedules

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As soon as DK Shivakumar took over as Chief Minister, he ordered that all government officials must be present in their offices by 10 am. The move aimed to ensure that officials began work early and were available to the public. Following this, the government also made it mandatory for officials to report for duty through the Kartavya app.

However, the digital attendance system, aimed at improving accountability among government employees, has met resistance from police and forest personnel, who argue that the app is ill-suited to the realities of fieldwork.

The 'Kartavya' mobile application, rolled out across government departments, boards and corporations, requires employees to mark attendance with a check-in upon reporting for duty and a check-out upon leaving work. While the system may suit conventional office environments, police personnel contend that their round-the-clock responsibilities make strict attendance logging impractical and potentially counterproductive. Senior officers and constables alike have submitted concerns, highlighting operational difficulties arising from the application of a fixed attendance framework to a department that functions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Sources said that, unlike most government employees, police personnel do not follow a standard 10 am to 5.30 pm work schedule. Duties frequently extend late into the night and often include emergency inspections, crime investigations, security deployments, night patrols and election-related assignments. Officers may need to report directly to crime scenes, VIP security duties or law-and-order situations without first visiting their stations. Under the present system, attendance is linked to designated office locations, raising concerns that personnel working in the field could be incorrectly marked absent. Several officers argue that requiring personnel to physically visit a police station merely to log attendance could delay urgent response times and interfere with operational efficiency. Personnel also point out that the app lacks sufficient flexibility to record attendance from active-duty locations or amend entries once they have been logged.

PIC FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

Kartavya, or the Karnataka Advanced Attendance Management System (KAAMS), was introduced by the state government on May 1, 2026 as a digital attendance platform, although its initial rollout was limited and enforcement remained relatively relaxed. After assuming office in June 2026, Chief Minister DK Shivakumar pushed for stricter accountability in government offices, leading to a mandatory 10 am check-in requirement through the app across state departments. The digital attendance system was strengthened through features such as geo-fencing and real-time monitoring, making it a key tool for tracking employee attendance and punctuality.

Another major concern relates to overtime and workload recognition. Police personnel routinely work far beyond the standard eight-hour shift, with many spending 12 to 18 hours continuously on duty during emergencies, festivals, elections and security operations. However, the current version of the app lacks any mechanism to automatically record extended duty hours or calculate corresponding overtime allowances and compensation. Officers argue that if attendance monitoring becomes the primary performance metric, personnel may focus more on logging in and out at prescribed times than on carrying out critical policing responsibilities. The issue is particularly sensitive because police personnel do not enjoy regular weekly holidays or many of the public holidays available to other government employees.

Questions have also been raised over the app's Aadhaar-linked consent requirement, with personnel seeking clarity on how their data will be used and protected. Many officers have questioned the need for Aadhaar integration in an attendance system and called for stronger privacy safeguards. Police representatives have suggested redesigning the app to better suit field duties by incorporating location-based attendance, flexible login options and overtime tracking. While supporting transparency and digital monitoring, they argue that the system must reflect the realities of policing to avoid creating unnecessary administrative burdens.

Forest staff raise concerns

Forest department officials have also criticised the attendance system as impractical for field personnel working in remote areas with poor mobile connectivity. Staff involved in wildlife conflict management, forest protection, rescue operations and investigations say their duties often require long hours in the field, making fixed check-in and check-out schedules difficult to maintain. Employees have cited poor network connectivity in forest regions such as Bandipur, Nagarahole and Bhadra, questioning the reliability of attendance recording. They have urged the government to exempt field personnel or frame separate guidelines suited to forest operations.

Court scraps four cases against Yatnal

The Karnataka High Court has quashed four criminal cases registered against Vijayapura MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal over his alleged objectionable and provocative remarks, including comments about Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao's personal life.

The cases were registered at Gandhi Chowk police station in Vijayapura, Sanjay Nagar police station in Bengaluru, Bailhongal police station in Belagavi district, and Mudhol police station in Bagalkot district.

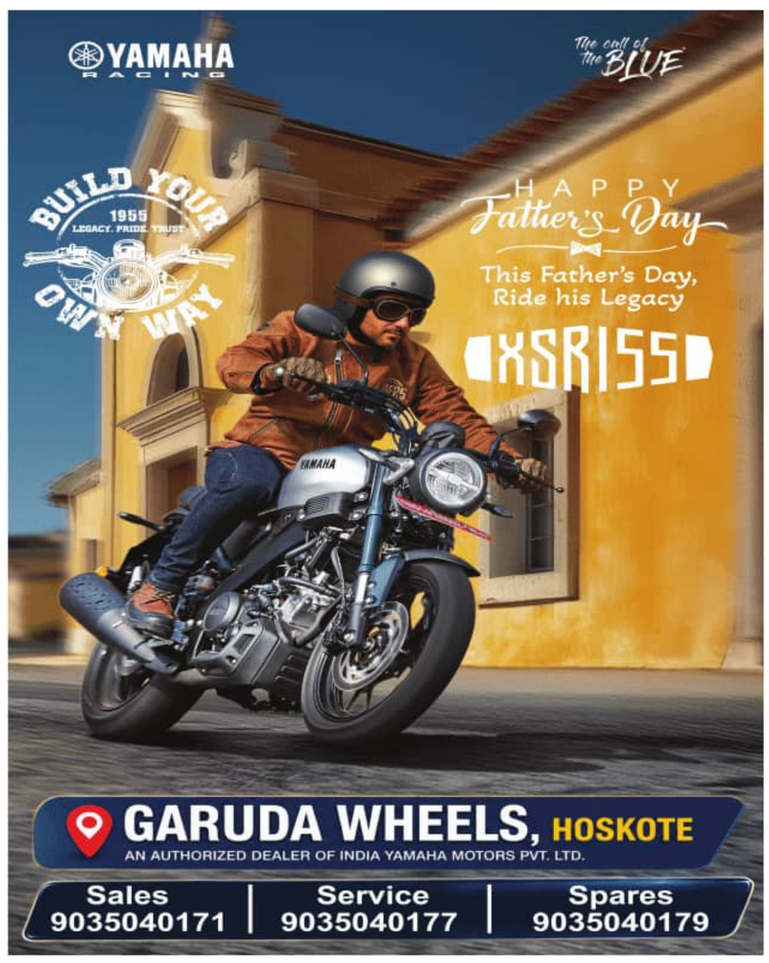
A single-judge bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna allowed the criminal petitions filed by Yatnal seeking the quashing of the FIRs and related proceedings.

Referring to various Supreme Court judgments, the bench observed that the petitioner's speech did not amount to provocation and ordered that the cases be quashed.

During the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Yatnal allegedly remarked that there was "Pakistan" in Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao's house during a media interaction in Vijayapura. The comments led to separate complaints being filed in Vijayapura and Bengaluru.

Two more complaints were filed in September 2024 over alleged provocative speeches by Yatnal at Ganapati immersion events in Bailhongal and Mudhol. He later approached the High Court to quash all four FIRs.

The controversy stemmed from remarks allegedly made by Yatnal in Vijayapura in April 2024, when he referred to Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao as "half-Pakistani". The comments drew widespread criticism and were alleged to target Rao's marriage into a Muslim family. **-ANi**



Karnataka rivers choke as dangerous bacterial pollution levels keep rising

Monitoring data reveals alarming contamination in major rivers, raising concerns over public health, ecosystem damage and enforcement

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Water quality in Karnataka's major rivers is continuing to deteriorate.

Bacterial contamination levels in some of the rivers have far exceeded the permissible limits, recent data from the Central Water Commission has highlighted.

The levels of total coliform in the Cauvery and Krishna rivers in Chamrajnagar and Chikamagaluru, respectively, have reached 2,20,000 MPN/100 ml, highlighting serious public health and ecological risks.

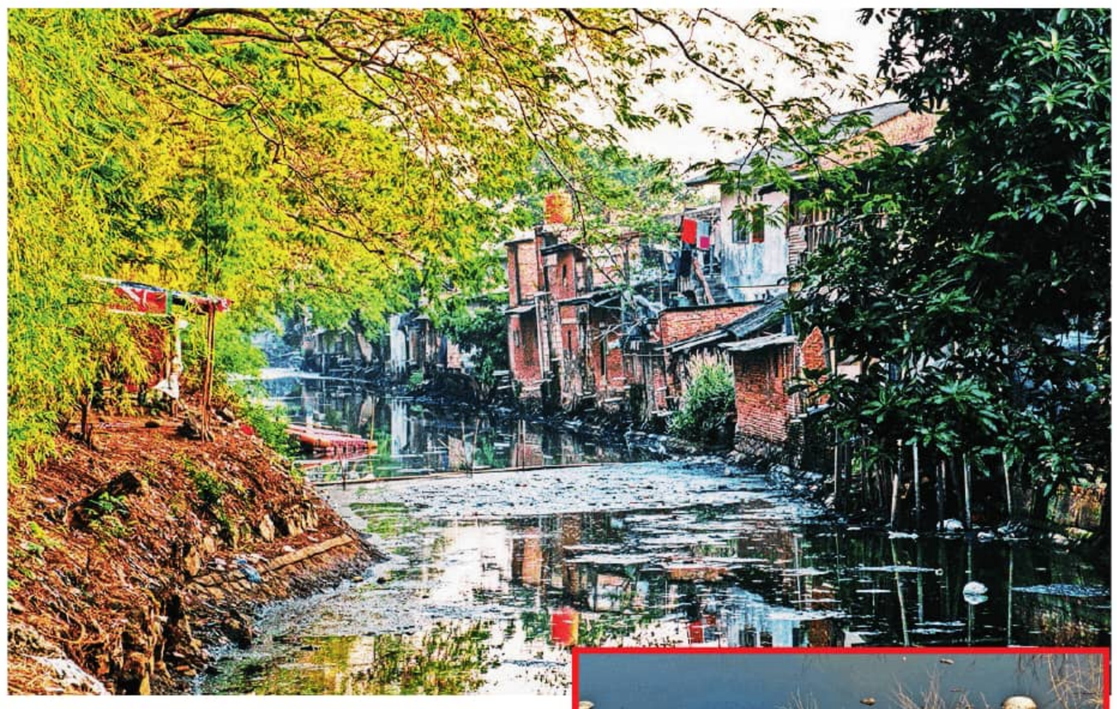
As per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) standards, water resources classified under Class 'B', which are suitable for outdoor bathing, should have dissolved oxygen levels of not less than 5 and total coliform organisms below 500 MPN per 100 millilitres.

"The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board has been monitoring pollution levels in many rivers in the state under the Central Government's National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP). The reports have always indicated high pollution levels in these rivers. However, no change in the status of these rivers over the years is a cause for concern," said a city-based ecologist.

Notably, KSPCB has been monitoring the water quality of 12 rivers at 36-38 locations across Karnataka under the programme. These rivers include Arkavathy, Lakshmantirtha, Tungabhadra, Bhadra, Cauvery, Kabini, Kagina, Krishna, Shimsha, Bhima, Netravati, and Tunga.

The KSPCB's recent monthly water quality report shows that many stations have recorded poor water quality.

Experts say that while it is important to keep a tab on the water quality of water bodies and monitoring is an essential component of a regulatory mechanism, it has to be accompanied by penalising the polluters and bringing down pollution sources.



Untreated sewage, industrial discharge and agricultural runoff continue degrading river health, while experts warn that monitoring alone is insufficient without stricter action against polluters and stronger accountability measures

"We have only been monitoring the level of pollution in these rivers without any concrete action on the ground. Unless polluters are heavily penalised, our rivers will continue to carry dirty water, posing health concerns to citizens. Apart from that, NWMP should expand its scope and bring in heavy metal pollution monitoring as well. These rivers are also receiving untreated industrial effluent and agricultural runoff," the expert added.

Riverbanks show severe pollution as untreated waste, plastic bags, and debris accumulate, reflecting worsening contamination in Karnataka's major water bodies

Currently, under NWMP, KSPCB tests four parameters - dissolved oxygen (DO) level, biochemical oxygen demand, total coliform, and fecal coliform levels - to deduce the water quality of the rivers.

1.7% of all passengers surveyed travelling with drink-driving violator

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

by its detrimental effect on an individual's reaction time, judgement, speed control and reduced vigilance. Evidence indicates that crash risk rises progressively with blood alcohol concentration (BAC), with the probability of involvement in a crash nearly doubling at a BAC of 0.08% compared with 0.03% . Alcohol-impaired driving is a driver-centric behaviour and the elevated risk for crashes associated with impaired driving, is often transferred to passengers, who face crash risks comparable to those of the alcohol-impaired driver. Despite being a risk group, passenger exposed to alcohol impaired driving are often overlooked and underrepresented in road safety programmes and targeted public health interventions," the paper notes.

The findings revealed that the proportion of vehicles with passenger exposure to drink-driving violators was 2.5%, meaning that for every 1,000 vehicles carrying passengers, 25 were driven by a driver, who had crossed the legal alcohol limit. This proportion was highest among younger drivers aged 18–24 years, at 5.7%, and among motorcyclists, at 4.6%.

The study also found that 1.7% of all passengers were travelling with a drink-driving violator. Alarmingly, the proportion was even higher among child passengers, with 2.1% travelling in vehicles operated by intoxicated drivers. Passengers on powered two-wheelers faced the greatest risk, with 4.4% travelling with drink-driving offenders, followed by passengers in trucks at 2.9%.

Author of the study Dr Gautham Melur Sukumar, and Additional professor of epidemiology, head of WHO Collaborating Centre for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion at NIMHANS said the concept of passive drink driving was introduced to highlight risks faced by passengers who may themselves be sober but are still exposed to danger.

"This is the first time the concept has been introduced in Bengaluru. The idea is similar to passive smoking. The person who is smoking suffers, but those around them who are not smoking also suffer. Likewise, in drunk driving, even those sitting next to a drunk driver face an increased risk of a crash. Whether the passenger is drunk or not, the risk of crashes increases when the driver is under the influence of alcohol," he said.

Dr Sukumar added that there is a need for passenger-focused communication strategies that discourage individuals from travelling with impaired drivers. "We also recommend including passive drink driving as an indicator in routine road crash surveillance systems and undertaking further research to understand its health and legal implications in the Indian context."

Absence of close friendships impact health, say experts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

marketing professional from Indiranagar.

Unlike in school and college, adulthood offers fewer opportunities for repeated social contacts. As per experts, this shift is not limited to a personal struggle but reflects a broader change in how people live and connect in modern times.

"After 25, lots of people slowly drift into careers, family duties and adult routines, which reduce the natural chance to meet new people," said Dr. Sachin Baliga, Consultant Psychiatrist at Fortis Hospital. "Unlike school or college where friendships seem to appear through repeated and effortless interactions, adult life demands more deliberate work to grow and keep connections. The trouble of making friends isn't just an individual failing, it's also shaped by wider social structures and environmental pressure."

Despite many researches showing that friendships are built through repeated interactions and shared experiences, many traditional community spaces become less central to daily life as adults find themselves lacking environments where such interactions can occur regularly.

According to Dr. Baliga, when people no longer have access to spaces such as classrooms, neighbourhood gatherings, sports groups, or community activities, relationships often tend to become superficial. While adults may interact with colleagues, acquaintances and neighbours, deeper emotional bonds can become difficult to establish without consistent engagement over time.

In Bengaluru, life is often dominated by long office hours, hybrid arrangements and traffic related commuting stress, so many professionals are left with very little energy to invest in friendships. "Online interactions give a kind of closeness but it doesn't always meet the deeper emotional side like trust, a willingness to be exposed and actual support that sticks around. Similarly, workplace relationships can sometimes remain professional rather than personal. As a result, people may have many contacts but very few close friendships," said Dr. Baliga.

Not good for your mind

According to city mental health experts, the absence of close friendships can have consequences beyond social well being. Persistent loneliness has been linked to stress, anxiety, depression, poor sleep quality and even physical health concerns such as high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

As traditional avenues meant for connection slowly diminish, many hobby based communities are emerging as alternative social spaces. Some of them include run clubs, cycling groups, fitness collectives, book clubs, hobby groups, theatre communities and coffee raves, which have become popular amongst Bengaluru's youth, giving many the opportunity to connect with like minded individuals outside of work and home.

"Everyone comes with different goals. Some want to run marathons, some want to improve their running and some simply want a more productive Sunday. I wouldn't say people join specifically for friendships, but friendships definitely happen naturally when people keep showing up and supporting each other," said Angela Tamang from Breath.RunClub.

While fitness may be a common denominator, co founders share that relationships are often built beyond running itself. "We have seen many friendships grow through the club, as members train together, travel for races, support others' goals. Beyond Sunday runs, we conduct interval sessions, race meet ups, coffee catch ups, fitness challenges and community events which go beyond running," said Aiusha Richelle Iongren.

According to them, it is a judgment free space which offers a place for shared goals and values. They further added that they have not really had people say they are lonely, but many come because they want to become a better version of themselves. For many, such communities have become what sociologists often refer to as a "third place", a space outside work and home where people with shared interests can connect.

Madhu Mandan, a fashion designer and resident of Church Street, shares that she notices a divide in how her generation socialises. "For some it is drinking and parties, for others it is quiet gym evenings as the Bengaluru rains become the driver of good moods. From the looks of it, many Gen Z are more inclined to isolation and only a select few would be social at this point," she said. She further highlighted that materialistic desires and aesthetic notions tend to create a divide and can harm one's self confidence, which could be another reason why people are choosing solitude more than they need.

THE SUNDAY READ

Baked to perfection

Iyengar Bakery's legacy: Migration stories to modern café culture

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In Bengaluru, bakeries are not just snack shops; their aromas often evoke childhood memories. The smell of freshly baked bread and the sight of neatly arranged honey cakes in glass cases have long made neighbourhood bakeries a beloved part of the city's everyday social life and culture. Members of the bakery community say Bengaluru has around 500 to 600 authentic Iyengar bakeries, showing just how deeply this unique tradition is rooted in the city.

This enduring relationship between food and memory came alive during the recent Malleshwaram Bakery Walk, organised by Bengaluru Prayana in collaboration with Science Gallery Bengaluru. Led by storytellers Shyam Kodavarthi and Raksha Nagaraj, the interactive walk took participants through the historic lanes of Malleshwaram.

Legacy from Hassan

As the walk began, Kodavarthi and Nagaraj traced the origins of Bengaluru's Iyengar bakery culture, noting that the city's first and original Iyengar bakery was established in 1898 by HS Thirumalachar. The bakery continues to function even today, and its success paved the way for several similarly named establishments across India.

Shyam explained that Thirumalachar, a Vaishnava Iyengar from Hassan, initially operated a sweet shop in Chickpet before entering the baking business. In the 1890s, an English customer, who frequently visited his shop, introduced him to European-style bread-making techniques and recipes at a time when such practices were largely unknown in India. This exposure became the foundation of a new baking tradition in Bengaluru.

He later adapted these recipes to local tastes by removing eggs and yeast and incorporating Indian spices and sweets, creating a unique vegetarian baking style. Together with his brother, he founded BB Bakery, also known as Bangalore Brahmin Bakery or Bangalore Brothers Bakery, which is considered the starting point of the city's Iyengar bakery culture.

CM Manasvi, Programmes Associate at Science Gallery, said that the Malleshwaram Bakery Walk linked food with history and was inspired by the exhibition CALORIE. "The walk is inspired by our exhibit 'Hunger and History: Famines in India,' as the Great Famine of 1876–1878 led many agriculturists to seek alternative livelihoods, thus contributing to the spread of bakeries across Bengaluru," she said. Kodavarthi explained the next phase of growth occurred in the 1950s and 1960s when many Iyengars from Hassan migrated to Bengaluru due to famine and droughts. Despite owning agricultural land, erratic rainfall made farming unsustainable, forcing families into financial hardship and prompting them to seek alternative livelihoods.

This led to a rapid expansion between the 1970s and 1980s -- nearly 500 Iyengar bakeries were established across Bengaluru.

Keeping a tradition alive

The walk was an immersive journey into Bengaluru's evolving food culture. Participants first stopped at New Janardana Bakery, a bakery that has served generations since 1962. Established by BR Varadharaja Iyengar, who hailed from Bylahalli village in Hassan, the bakery represents the story of migration and entrepreneurship that shaped Bengaluru's bakery culture. Like many founders of the city's famed Iyengar bakeries, Varadharaja Iyengar brought baking skills while Bengaluru was rapidly expanding and became known for bringing affordable baked goods options for local residents.

Today, the bakery is managed by his son Raghu. Participants learned how Iyengar bakeries created distinctly Bengaluru favourites such as khara buns, vegetable puffs, Congress kadlekai, honey cakes, and masala bread.

"Two types of mixers are used for baking. Planetary mixers are used for cakes because they mix light batter using rotating tools in a fixed bowl. Spiral mixers are used for bread dough as they turn the bowl and hook together, making thick dough smooth and well-developed," Kodavarthi said.

The second stop, Iyengar's Bakery, founded in 2001 by Ramapriya, whose family also traces its roots to Bylahalli, reflects the continued relevance of the model. Having lived in Bengaluru for nearly four decades, the family set up the bakery to carry forward a culinary heritage passed down through generations. "Today, the bakery is run with a team of around 10, with puff pastries and bread among its most popular offerings. Members of the bakery community estimate that Bengaluru has around 500 to 600 authentic Iyengar bakeries, many of which maintain quality standards through regular food safety checks and training programmes conducted by bakery associations," he added.

New generation

The third stop was at Amma's Pastries, formerly known as Jyothi Bakery. Founded in 2013 by Ranju, whose family hails from Hollahalli in Hassan, the bakery represents the changing demographics of city's baking sector.

Unlike traditional Iyengar-run bakeries, Amma's Pastries is managed by a Gowda family, reflecting how bakery entrepreneurship has expanded across communities.

The walk gave a sampling of beloved bakery staples such as Dil Pasand, bread cake, rusks, nippat, and assorted biscuits. Along with stories about how honey cake or Dil Pasand originated, meanings of words were also discovered. Tutti frutti is an Italian term meaning "all fruits". In India, an alternative version is made using raw papaya. The papaya is cut into cubes, boiled, soaked in sugar syrup, coloured, flavoured, and then dried to create the bright, sweet ingredient used in baking.

"Growing up in Bengaluru, trips to the neighbourhood local bakery were always special. I still remember pressing my face against the glass display, looking at rows of honey cakes, potato buns, biscuits, and puffs, trying to decide what to pick. The smell of freshly baked bread would hit you the moment you walked in. For many of us, these bakeries were part of everyday life, stopping by after school, picking up snacks for guests at home, or carrying a packet of biscuits back from an evening walk. Years later, I realised that almost every Bangalorean has a bakery story. These places are part of our memories, our neighbourhoods, and the city we grew up in," said Nagaraj.

"Growing up in Bengaluru, trips to the neighbourhood local bakery were always special. I still remember pressing my face against the glass display, looking at rows of honey cakes, potato buns, biscuits, and puffs, trying to decide what to pick

— Raksha Nagaraj, Bengaluru Prayana

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

PELICAN'S PERFECT STRIKE

Our reader shares a fascinating image of a Spot-billed Pelican at Sarakki Lake, captured during an early morning visit. The massive bird appeared almost shrunken as it closely watched for fish, before suddenly extending its long beak in one swift motion to catch its prey, offering a remarkable glimpse into the precision and patience of nature.

The picture was clicked by reader **Sridhar Comaravalli**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Towing drive, health campaigns set to reshape Jayanagar streets soon

Traffic police ready towing vehicles as health officials intensify polio immunisation and diarrhoea control efforts across vulnerable communities

After months of complaints over vehicles parked on roads and footpaths, towing operations are set to begin in the Jayanagar Zone next week. Three towing vehicles procured by the Bengaluru South City Corporation will be handed over to the traffic police, who will use them to remove vehicles parked in violation of traffic and parking rules.

The decision was announced after Greater Bengaluru Authority Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao and Bengaluru South City Corporation Commissioner K N Ramesh inspected the towing vehicles earmarked for deployment in the zone on Saturday. Officials said the vehicles have received fitness certification from the Transport Department and are ready for operations.

The corporation arranged the vehicles on an outsourcing basis as part of efforts to address persistent parking issues on key roads in Jayanagar and surrounding areas. Traffic police personnel will launch the enforcement drive once the vehicles are formally handed over. Officials said the initiative aims to improve traffic flow and pedestrian access on roads where unauthorised parking has become a recurring problem. Residents and commuters have repeatedly raised concerns about congestion caused by indiscriminate parking, particularly during peak traffic hours.

Corporation-backed towing vehicles await handover to traffic police for action against recurring parking violations and road encroachments.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru East City Corporation Additional Commissioner Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar chaired a review meeting with health department officials to assess preparedness for the National Pulse Polio Immunisation Day and the Intensified Diarrhoea Control Fortnight (IDCF). Officials reviewed micro-planning, vaccine availability, cold-chain management, staff deployment, awareness campaigns and logistics for the immunisation programme.

Authorities prepare dual initiatives: towing operations to clear congested Jayanagar roads and health campaigns to protect children from polio and diarrhoea, ensuring safer streets and stronger public health outcomes

Special focus was placed on reaching children of migrant workers, residents of labour settlements and those living near transport hubs. Officials were directed to coordinate with the Labour, Education, Minority Welfare and Medical Education departments to identify vulnerable populations and improve coverage. The review also covered preparations for the IDCF campaign ahead of the monsoon. Health officials were instructed to maintain adequate stocks of ORS packets and zinc tablets and strengthen public awareness on safe drinking water, hygiene and handwashing. Discussions also focused on Acute Flaccid Paralysis surveillance, vaccine cold-chain maintenance and improving services at Urban Primary Health Centres through optimal staff utilisation and digital healthcare platforms. **— BMB**

DID YOU KNOW?

A pill bug dwelling under a garden pot curls its body into a tiny armored ball as self-defense. Far below the ocean surface, some of its much larger relatives face a harder problem: how to stay alive when the next meal may not come for years. Deep-sea isopods survive more than five years without food through a combination of anatomical and genetic adaptations, according to a study published in Cell. Researchers found that these crustaceans possess huge stomachs, extremely low metabolism and a gene called ND1 that helps regulate energy use.

"It is a world of perpetual night and crushing pressure, yet life finds a way," said Jianhai Xiang of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The study examined Bathynomus doederleini and Bathynomus jamesi. In the deeper-dwelling species, the stomach occupies about two-thirds of the body cavity, allowing it to store large meals. "Deep-sea isopods have a clever 'earn more, spend less' survival strategy," said lead author Jianbo Yuan. He described ND1 as a metabolic switch that helps conserve energy under cold conditions and extend survival during starvation. **— Reuters**

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Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

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Social media posts fake, question papers safe: NTA DG rejects re-NEET leak claims

The Claim: Social media posts and videos claim that the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination question paper has been leaked ahead of the June 21 exam. Images and videos circulating online purportedly show the actual question paper, leading to concerns among students and parents. Some users have alleged that the exam's integrity has been compromised and demanded clarification from authorities over the matter.

Fact: NTA Director General Abhishek Singh has dismissed the alleged NEET-UG 2026 paper leak claims as fake, stating that question papers remain secure. The agency says multiple security layers protect the paper-setting, printing, transportation, and storage processes. NTA has warned candidates against misinformation and scams, stressing that official communication comes only through authorised channels and verified sources.

Amid a surge of posts and videos circulating on social media claiming that the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination paper has been leaked, National Testing Agency (NTA) Director General Abhishek Singh has dismissed the claims as "fake" and asserted that question papers remain secure. Nearly 23 lakh candidates are set to appear for the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination on Sunday, June 21. In recent days, several social media users and anxious students have shared images and videos purportedly showing question papers, prompting widespread concern and calls for clarification from the NTA.

Responding to queries from ANI, Singh said, "They are fake, and question papers are safe." The NTA, along with multiple government agencies, is working around the clock to counter fraudsters and scammers who are using fake question papers to deceive students and parents. As part of these efforts, the government has temporarily restricted access to Telegram, which was being misused in some cases to run such scams. Earlier this week, Singh reiterated the agency's commitment to conducting an error-free examination on June 21. The NTA has also intensified its outreach to candidates through social media, urging them not to fall prey to misinformation.

On Friday, the agency said it is sending SMS, email, and WhatsApp reminders to candidates to download their admit cards for the re-examination. It cautioned students against fraudulent messages and clarified that official communication will only come from the sender ID "NICPEP" and the email address "no-reply.neet.nta@nic.in". The agency emphasised that it will never seek payments, share question papers, or send admit cards through unofficial links. Candidates who have already downloaded their admit cards need not do so again.

"NTA is committed 100 per cent to ensuring that no malpractice takes place. Every question paper has been prepared in a completely secure manner. We have added multiple layers of security at every stage -- from setting and translation to printing, transportation, and storage," Singh said. He added that the agency has coordinated with multiple ministries and agencies, including the Ministry of Home Affairs, paramilitary forces, the Department of Posts, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of External Affairs, as well as state governments and police. "This is a commitment that India has made to its young minds. We will ensure that the examination is conducted in a flawless manner across all 5,000-plus centres in India and 14 centres abroad," he said. **— ANI**

Fast-growing Bengaluru aims for $420 billion economy

BMR plans major economic expansion through growth centres, transport projects and innovation-led industries while generating millions of new jobs

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AI, aerospace and semiconductor sectors expected to drive future growth

Bengaluru has emerged as India's fastest-growing metropolitan region, recording a real Gross Value Added (GVA) growth rate of 9.7 per cent, ahead of Hyderabad's 7.5 per cent and Karnataka's overall growth rate of 8.5 per cent. The Bengaluru Metropolitan Region (BMR) is now working towards growing its economy to between $390 billion and $420 billion by 2037.

The roadmap was reviewed at a Steering Committee meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh. The Institute for Sustainability, Employment and Growth Foundation (ISEG Foundation) presented recommendations for a Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Plan for BMR following a Statement of Intent signed with the Karnataka government under Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar.

Growth numbers

BMR, home to around 15 million people and an economy estimated at $149 billion, contributes over 43 per cent of Karnataka's Gross State Domestic Product. The region's per capita GDP stands at about $9,700, higher than state and national averages, while supporting around 3.8 million jobs, nearly 16 per cent of total state employment.

Technology base

Bengaluru has more than two million technology professionals, over 1,000 Global Capability Centres (GCCs) and more than 13,000 startups. The city has a significant presence in artificial intelligence, semiconductor design, aerospace, biotechnology, and research and development. Officials said these sectors are expected to play a central role in the region's future growth strategy.

Bengaluru hosts over two million technology professionals, more than 1,000 GCCs and 13,000 startups, strengthening its position as India's innovation hub

Development plan

The proposed economic master plan includes the creation of new growth centres within and outside Bengaluru's existing urban limits. These centres are expected to accommodate industry, IT and biotechnology companies, research facilities, manufacturing units, logistics hubs, residential projects and commercial developments. Consultations with government departments, industry representatives, investors and academic institutions are under way, and the recommendations will be incorporated into the final plan.

Transport projects

The government is considering a series of transport and infrastructure projects to improve connectivity across the metropolitan region. These include a 287-km circular rail network, four Regional Rapid Transit System corridors, 400-500 km of additional Metro lines, Metro extensions, expansion of the suburban rail network and integrated multimodal transport infrastructure.

2037 target

Government projections indicate that BMR could grow into a $390-$420 billion economy by 2037 while creating an additional 2.5 to 3 million jobs over the next decade. Officials said the strategy focuses on artificial intelligence, manufacturing, technology, research and urban development, with participation from industry, academic institutions, startups and investors.

NEET re-test: 'Armed forces for exam' is a first

Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge on Saturday questioned the Centre's handling of the NEET examination process, noting that this was the first time he had seen armed forces deployed to conduct an examination.

Speaking to ANI, Kharge said the state government had extended full cooperation to all requests made regarding the examination process.

"Well, the state has offered complete cooperation to anything that anybody has asked for. More importantly, the responsibility lies with the NTA and the central government. This is the first time I have seen them deploy armed forces to conduct exams. This shows the competence level of the government," Kharge remarked.

In an unprecedented operation aimed at preventing paper leaks, the Indian Air Force (IAF) carried out a large-scale aerial logistics mission to securely deliver NEET-UG question papers across the country. Operating under tight security, the IAF flew more than 200 sorties using transport aircraft and helicopters.

Sources told ANI that question papers were picked up from two hubs and distributed to examination centres at more than 20 locations.

The NEET examination held last month was cancelled following allegations of a question paper leak. Authorities later announced that the re-examination would be conducted on June 21. **–ANI**

RTC bus fare hike under government review

Responding to questions about a possible increase in RTC bus fares, Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Saturday that the issue was under review.

Speaking to reporters after the Cabinet meeting at Vidhana Soudha, he noted that the price difference between diesel purchased by private operators and state transport corporation depots was nearly Rs 40 per litre.

While previous decisions had linked fare revisions to fuel price increases, the government would balance the financial sustainability of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) with public convenience.

Shivakumar said KSRTC must survive, but passengers' interests must also be protected, adding that a decision would be taken to keep public welfare in mind.

He further announced that the government would strengthen Karnataka's legal division in New Delhi to improve the handling of cases pending before the Supreme Court. A dedicated team of officers will identify and secure more Central government projects and schemes for Karnataka.

The Cabinet also approved Rs 80 crore for the construction of Karnataka Bhavan-IV in New Delhi through the Karnataka Bhavan Welfare Board. The facility will provide accommodation and amenities for students preparing for UPSC and other competitive examinations. **–IANS**

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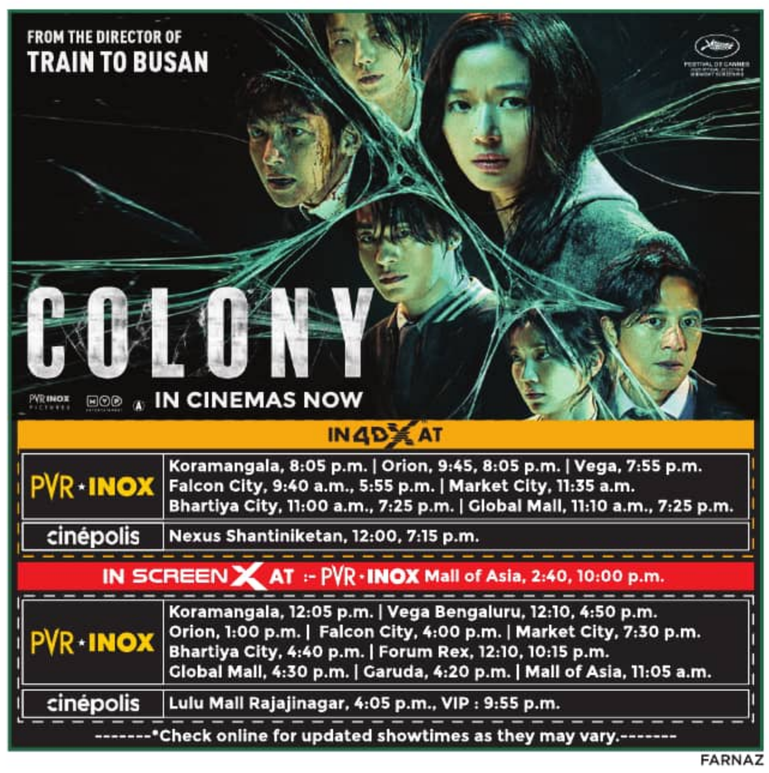
BIG PLANS: Priyanka teases next film with Angelina Jolie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Falcon City, 9:40 a.m., 5:55 p.m. | Market City, 11:35 a.m.
Bhartiya City, 11:00 a.m., 7:25 p.m. | Global Mall, 11:10 a.m., 7:25 p.m.
cinépolis
Nexus Shantiniketan, 12:00, 7:15 p.m.
IN SCREENX AT :- PVR·INOX Mall of Asia, 2:40, 10:00 p.m.
PVR·INOX
Koramangala, 12:05 p.m. | Vega Bengaluru, 12:10, 4:50 p.m.
Orion, 1:00 p.m. | Falcon City, 4:00 p.m. | Market City, 7:30 p.m.
Bhartiya City, 4:40 p.m. | Forum Rex, 12:10, 10:15 p.m.
Global Mall, 4:30 p.m. | Garuda, 4:20 p.m. | Mall of Asia, 11:05 a.m.
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Lulu Mall Rajajinagar, 4:05 p.m., VIP : 9:55 p.m.
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ADMISSION OPEN

Ticket scam unearthed in Kudremukh trek bookings

Forest officials uncovered a major irregularity in the online ticketing system for the popular trekking routes at Kudremukh and Netravati Peak, exposing what appears to be an organised ticket resale racket.

During a verification drive at Netravati Peak, Assistant Conservator of Forests Latha Bhat found several trekkers carrying tickets that did not match their identity documents. An inquiry revealed that many had not booked the tickets themselves but had purchased trekking packages from Bengaluru-based operators. Officials denied entry to more than 50 trekkers and sent them back after discovering their bookings had been obtained through unauthorised means. The crackdown follows growing complaints that trekking permits for Kudremukh and Netravati Peak sold out within minutes every week, leaving genuine visitors and local homestay guests without access. Investigators suspect some agencies reused identity details of previous trekkers to secure permits and resell them through package tours. Forest authorities said they would initiate further action against those involved in manipulating the online booking system. **–BMB**

Your Connect

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BANGALORE

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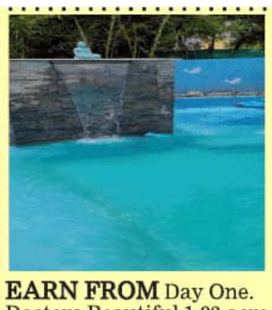

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sayeeda Banu W/O, Ansar Pasha R/o #460,shameer Mohalla, Mulbagal 563131 have changed my name to Sayeda Banu for all purposes.

WE, Mr. RAKSHITH SHETTY and Mrs. SHREYA SHETTY, residing at No.292, Saish, 5th Main, 8th Cross, S T Bed, 4th Block, Koramangala, Bangalore - 560034, Both are Parents of SAMVEDYAA SHETTY, We have Changed our minor daughter name from SAMVEDYAA to SAMVEDYAA SHETTY, Vide affidavit, dated: 19.06.2026. Sworn before Notary Ganesh Gowda M.V. Bangalore-

I, KISHORE LAKSHMICHANDCH MIRGHA residing at 201, Thakuralal Royal Apts, 6th Cross, Bhuvaneshwarinagar, Karnataka 560024, have changed my name to KISHORE L vide affidavit dated 15/06/2026 sworn before notary, T V Bhadravijaya Bangalore

I, SAIF ULLA S/O SYED JALEEL, R/O H NO 804,JP NAGAR 9TH PHASE AVALAHALLI,NEAR GURUKUL SCHOOL,ALAHALLI ANJANAPURA BENGALURU 560062. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SYED SAIF ULLA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, RITHIKA, residing at 07, RR School Road, Dodda bommasandra,Vidyaranyapura , Bengaluru, Karnataka-560097, have changed my name to RITHIKA MAHESH vide affidavit dated 20/06/2026 sworn before notary, T V Bhadravijaya Bangalore

I, Fareed Ahmed Pasha S/o Hussain Pasha R/o #1967 SLV near Tch Kolar District, Karnataka. Bangarpet - 563114 have changed my name to Fareed Pasha for all purposes.

I, Hidayathulla Mohamed Hanif, S/o Mohammed Hanif, R/at #13, 2nd cross, Gangamma Temple road, Bommanahalli, Manganapalya, Bommanahalli Post, Bengaluru-68, have chan ged my name to Hidayathulla, vide affidavit dated: 19.06.2026 Notary Meer Hassan, B.lore.

I, Jeshila Banu Peer Sindha W/o Mohideen Batcha Jinna Batcha R/o No 242 Flat No 301, Central Excise Layout Phase 2,Doddakammanahalli, Bengaluru-560076.Have Changed My Name to Jeshila Banu for All Purposes.

I, AKSHAY, Residing at No 554, 20th Main, 36th Cross, 4th T Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore-560041, Have changed my name to AKSHAY ANAND vide affidavit dated 20/6/2026 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, MUHEEB PASHA resident of Bommenahallipalya, Kunigal Taluk, Tumakuru- 572126 have changed my name to MOHEEB PASHA vide affidavit dated: 09/05/2026 Before Notary Deepa.M Bangalore.

I, Swarajya Lakshmi Jasti R/o B.31, 3rd Floor, Century corbel, B-block, Sahakarnagar, 60ft road, Bengaluru 560092 have changed my name to Swarajya Laxmi Jasti. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I, Khantikaben Patel, R/o D-1119, PSR Krish Kamal, Neeladri Road, Electronic City Phase -1 , Bangalore-560100 , have changed my name to Patel Khantika Dhruvkumar

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UNDER PRESSURE

Cunha creates history with record-equalling brace for Brazil

1. Matheus Cunha (C) of Brazil celebrates a goal with his teammates during the group C match between Brazil and Haiti;
2. Mert Muldur of Türkiye reacts after the group D match between Paraguay and Türkiye

Matheus Cunha's brace against Haiti marked the 10th occasion a Brazilian player has scored two or more first-half goals in a FIFA World Cup match, the most by any nation.

The last Brazilian to achieve the feat was Neymar against Cameroon back in 2014, as per ESPN.

Brazil got their FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign up and running in style with a convincing 3-0 victory over Haiti in Philadelphia, moving to the top of Group C and ending the Caribbean nation's hopes of reaching the knockout stage.

After a disappointing 1-1 draw against Morocco in their opening match, Carlo Ancelotti's side arrived under pressure to deliver a statement performance. Haiti, meanwhile, entered the contest encouraged by a spirited display against Scotland despite suffering defeat.

Brazil showed their attacking intent from the outset and thought they had taken an early lead when Raphinha finished from Bruno Guimaraes' clever through ball. However, the celebrations were cut short by an offside flag. The breakthrough eventually arrived midway through the first half.

Vinicius Junior's powerful effort was parried by goalkeeper Johny Placide, but Matheus Cunha reacted quickest to force the loose ball over the line despite desperate attempts from the Haitian defence to clear it.

Cunha doubled Brazil's advantage soon after, capping an impressive display with a clinical finish. The striker raced onto a perfectly weighted pass from Vinicius and blasted his effort into the roof of the net at the near post, leaving Placide with no chance.

The victory gives Brazil four points from two matches, level with Morocco but ahead on goal difference, and leaves them well placed to secure a place in the Round of 32.

They will face Scotland in their final group match, while Haiti's elimination was confirmed despite their improved second-half display. (ANI)

Turkiye bow out of tournament with 0 goals in 62 shots

Turkiye had one of the most heartbreaking FIFA World Cup campaigns by a team as they bowed out of the tournament without scoring any goals in the 62 shots they attempted. A goal from Matias Galarza helped Paraguay seal a 1-0 win over Turkiye in Group D, securing three points and eliminating the European side from contention for the Round of 32.

Turkiye is still left with a fixture against the USA, scheduled for June 26. In their first fixture, they had faced a 2-0 loss to Australia.

As per Opta, Turkiye has so far attempted 62 shots at the goal, unable to find the back of the net even once. On the other hand, their opponents scored three goals with just 16 shots, highlighting the cruel nature of the sport.

Paraguay boosted their FIFA World Cup 2026 hopes with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Turkiye in Group D, securing three vital points and eliminating the European side from contention for the Round of 32.

The South Americans made a dream start at the San Francisco Bay Area venue, striking just 65 seconds after kick-off. A misplaced Turkish pass gifted possession to Paraguay, and Matias Galarza wasted no time in punishing the mistake. Spotting space from distance, the midfielder unleashed a powerful effort that flew beyond goalkeeper Ugurcan Çakir to give Los Guaranies an early advantage.

Stunned by the setback, Turkiye gradually settled into the contest and began creating opportunities. Arda Guler fired over the bar in the 14th minute before Kenan Yildiz tested goalkeeper Orlando Gill with an ambitious bicycle kick.

The Turks came agonisingly close to an equaliser shortly after the half-hour mark when Mert Muldur's header from a free-kick rattled both the crossbar and the post before somehow staying out.

–ANI

Socceroos off to sluggish start with fall to US

Australia coach Tony Popovic blamed a poor first-half display after the Socceroos suffered a 2-0 defeat to the United States in their second Group D match at the FIFA World Cup on Saturday.

Australia entered the contest with confidence following a surprise 2-0 victory over Türkiye in its tournament opener, but struggled to cope with the intensity of the Americans in front of a large crowd in Seattle.

The United States took the lead in the 11th minute when a cross from Folarin Balogun was turned into the net by Australian defender Cameron Burgess. Alex Freeman doubled the advantage shortly before halftime, leaving the Socceroos facing an uphill battle.

Although Australia showed greater urgency after the break and enjoyed more possession in attacking areas, it was unable to find a way back into the match as the Americans secured their second consecutive victory and booked a place in the knockout stage.

Popovic said the outcome was largely decided during a disappointing opening 45 minutes.

"Their quality is clear, their power is clear, their athleticism is clear," Popovic told reporters. "We didn't match that in the first half. We found it difficult to win challenges and second balls."

"We were slow to every ball and couldn't really regain any momentum. We conceded a couple of soft goals and looked flat and lethargic in the first half."

The Australian coach made three substitutions at halftime and was encouraged by the response from his players

"You can easily cave in under that type of pressure, physically and emotionally, but the players responded extremely well," he said. "The second half was much better. It would have been nice to get a goal and see what happened from there, but I was pleased with the reaction."

The defeat left Australia on three points from two matches and facing a crucial final group game against Paraguay on June 25. The United States moved to six points and became one of the first teams to secure a place in the round of 32.

Despite the setback, Popovic said his side remained firmly in contention for qualification.

"We have to recover, learn from this performance and be ready for the next game," he said. "There is still a lot to play for."

–IANS

Too hot to handle

The World Cup has brought plenty of concern over weather conditions during games in the United States, Mexico and Canada, but while Spain will play Saudi Arabia in an air-conditioned stadium, a fan zone in Madrid has been cancelled due to the high temperatures forecast.

The Spanish football federation (RFEF) turned Plaza de Colon in the capital city into a large meeting point for fans, called Plaza Seleccion, where supporters could watch Spain's World Cup matches on large screens. Huge crowds turned out to watch Spain's disappointing scoreless draw with Cape Verde on Monday but Sunday's event for the next Group H match will not go ahead, with temperatures of up to 39 degrees Celsius (102.2 degrees Fahrenheit) expected.

"For reasons of safety and protection of public health, it has been decided to cancel all the activities planned in the Colon Fan Zone, including the broadcast of the match," the RFEF said in a statement on Saturday.

–Reuters

Red card for cover-up

Paraguay midfielder Miguel Almiron became the first player to be sent off under FIFA's newly introduced anti-discrimination rule during his side's crucial 1-0 victory over Turkiye in Group D of the FIFA World Cup 2026 on Friday (Local Time).

According to goal.com, the veteran midfielder received a straight red card in first-half stoppage time after an altercation with Turkish defender Mert Muldur. Almiron was seen covering his mouth while speaking to his opponent, prompting intervention from match officials.

Following a VAR review, referee officials upheld the dismissal, leaving Paraguay to play the entire second half with 10 men.

The red card marked the first application at the World Cup of the rule introduced by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) earlier this year.

Under the regulation, players who cover their mouths with a hand, arm or shirt while making comments during confrontational situations can be sent off, as the act may conceal discriminatory or abusive language. **–ANI**

Where is Neymar?

Brazil star Neymar has found himself at the centre of a growing World Cup controversy after President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva publicly mocked the forward's continued absence from the national team, adding fuel to an already heated debate over his inclusion in the squad.

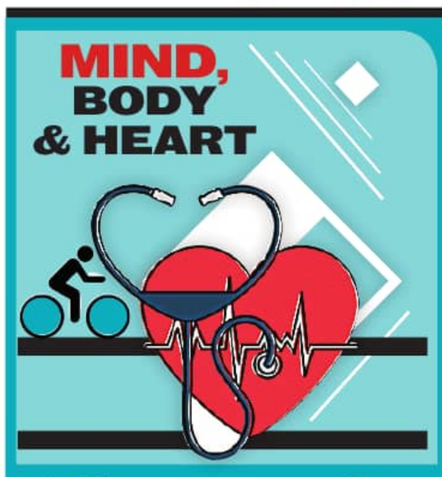
With Brazil getting ready for their second Group C match against Haiti, the 34-year-old remains out as he heals from a grade two calf injury he sustained while playing for Santos on May 17. His absence was noticeable during Brazil's opening 1-1 draw with Morocco. Carlo Ancelotti's team struggled to find clear scoring chances and missed the attacking spark that Neymar has brought throughout his international career.

This situation prompted an unusual comment from the Brazilian president on Friday. "Neymar isn't even playing, dude," Lula said in Portuguese, according to Ataque Futbolero. "I saw something yesterday. Neymar is the first player in the world called up for remote work."

–IANS

HEALTH TIP: Quinoa has high fibre in it that makes it a great low-GI choice

Whole grains like oatmeal, bran, wholewheat and brown rice have soluble fibre that increases HDL



All you need to know about...

Tea in summer

Warm but cool

The idea that warm drinks can help cool the body is rooted in how our bodies regulate temperature. According to Parimal Shah, CEO and Founder, Cherise India Pvt Ltd, "A warm cup of herbal tea triggers perspiration, which is the body's most natural and efficient cooling mechanism. This is why, some cultures, especially across South Asia and the Middle East, have been drinking warm beverages during their hottest seasons for centuries."

When you drink something warm, your body may respond by producing sweat. As that sweat evaporates from the skin, it helps cool the body naturally.

Science behind this

Dietician Drishya Ale from Paras Health, Gurugram, agrees to this claim. "Many people believe that drinking hot tea in summer can actually help the body feel cooler, and there is some science behind this. Warm beverages like tea may stimulate sweating, which is the body's natural cooling mechanism. When sweat evaporates from the skin, it helps regulate body temperature and creates a cooling effect."

However, she explains that the benefit depends on factors such as weather conditions, hydration levels, and how much tea is consumed.

Summer favourite

Tea has long been a staple beverage in Indian households, but its role is evolving. "Tea is a cornerstone of summer health, offering a versatility that few other drinks struggle to match," says Parimal. "With over 75% of Indians reaching for a cup every single day, it's far more than just a classic, it has become a staple beverage."

Beyond traditional masala chai, consumers are increasingly exploring cold brews, tea mocktails, sparkling teas, fruit-infused blends, and ready-to-drink options. —Femina

GO ON A CUISINE CRUISE

Lay out a delicious global table

ALL PIC FOR REPRESENTATION PURPOSE ONLY

KOREAN BRAISED TOFU (KOREAN)

INGREDIENTS

- 300 g block extra firm silken tofu
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1/3 cup water
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 2 tbsp minced spring onion
- 1½ tbsp gochujang
- 1½ tsp gochugaru
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- Salt to taste
- 2 tsp toasted sesame seeds
- Sliced spring onion, to garnish

METHOD

- Cut the tofu into ¼-inch-thick rectangles.
- Heat the sesame oil in a pan.
- Add the tofu and cook for two to three minutes, until lightly browned. Turn the tofu pieces over and cook for another two to three minutes until both sides are golden brown.
- Mix together the water, light soy sauce, minced spring onion, gochujang, gochugaru, garlic, and salt in a small bowl.
- Add this to the pan with the tofu. Turn the heat down to low-medium. Simmer and drizzle the sauce over the tofu from time to time, until most of the liquid has been absorbed.
- Remove the tofu to a plate, sprinkle with the toasted sesame seeds and sliced spring onion, and serve hot.
- **Note:** Gochujang (red chilli paste), a savoury, sweet, and spicy fermented condiment, and gochugaru, a traditional red chilli powder, are quintessential condiments in Korean cooking.

MISO RAMEN (JAPANESE)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp minced ginger
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce
- 6 cups Asian stock
- 2 tbsp miso paste
- 1 tsp Sriracha or chilli sauce
- 4 baby bokchoy, halved
- 1 block extra firm tofu, cut into small cubes
- 1 cup broccoli, cut into pieces
- 1 zucchini, zoodled or julienned into thin strips
- 1 carrot, zoodled or julienned in thin strips
- ½ cup mushrooms (optional)

1 pack ramen noodles (cooked as per packet instructions and drained)

- Salt to taste
- Bean sprouts, spring onions, togarashi, and sesame seeds, to garnish

METHOD

- Heat the sesame oil in a medium saucepan, add the onion and sauté until translucent and soft.
- Add the garlic, ginger and light soy sauce and cook for three to five minutes.
- Add the Asian stock, miso and Sriracha or chilli sauce and cook for 10 to 12 minutes.
- Add the baby bok choy, tofu, broccoli, zucchini, carrots, and mushrooms (if using) to the soup. Don't overcook the vegetables as they will get mushy (see Tip).
- Once the soup is boiling, check the seasoning, then divide the soup between separate bowls. Add the cooked noodles, veggies, and tofu.
- Garnish with spring onions, bean sprouts, togarashi, and sesame seeds, and serve hot.
- **TIP:** You can also steam the vegetable separately and add to the stock to avoid overcooking.

MALFATTI (ITALIAN)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups finely-chopped spinach
- 1 cup crumbled paneer
- 1 tsp minced green chillies
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 2 to 3 tbsp whole wheat flour
- 2 to 3 tbsp semolina (rava)

For the marinara sauce:

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 6 tomatoes, boiled and chopped
- 2 green chillies, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp red chilli flakes
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- Salt to taste
- 1 tsp sugar (optional)
- 2 to 4 tbsp fresh basil

To assemble:

- 1 cup marinara sauce
- 16 to 20 malfatti balls
- ½ to 1 cup grated mozzarella
- 6 basil leaves

METHOD

- To prepare the malfatti balls, drop the chopped spinach in boiling water and remove once wilted (two to three minutes). Squeeze out the water. Combine the spinach with the crumbled paneer, green chilli, Italian seasoning, chilli flakes, and flours. Make equal round balls of the mixture. Place the dumplings in a steamer and steam for 10 to 12 minutes until the dumplings are well cooked (see Tip).
- To make the marinara sauce, heat the olive oil in a pan, sauté the onions and garlic until soft and translucent. Add the tomatoes, chillies, red chilli flakes, Italian seasoning, salt and sugar (if using), and let the mixture simmer for 10 to 15 minutes. Take it off the heat, and blend to a coarse consistency. Add the blended mixture back to the pan and add the basil. Cook for five to seven minutes. Adjust the seasonings.
- Preheat the oven to 200° C.
- To assemble the dish, add one cup of the marinara sauce to a baking tray, place the malfatti balls, and top with the grated mozzarella. Bake in the preheated oven for 10 minutes. Serve hot.
- **TIP:** You can also drop the dumplings in boiling water and let them cook for eight to 10 minutes. Remove and drain thoroughly before adding to the sauce.

Karishma Mehta (@BowledOverByKari on Instagram) for Femina

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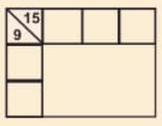
@BangaloreMirror

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

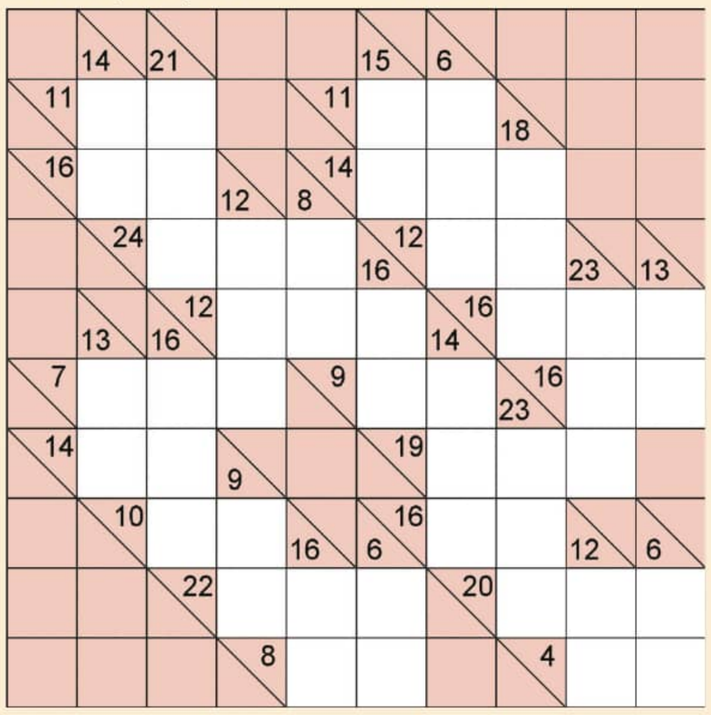
If a man was born 220298400 seconds before his wife, how many years (to the nearest year) older than her is he?

Kakuro

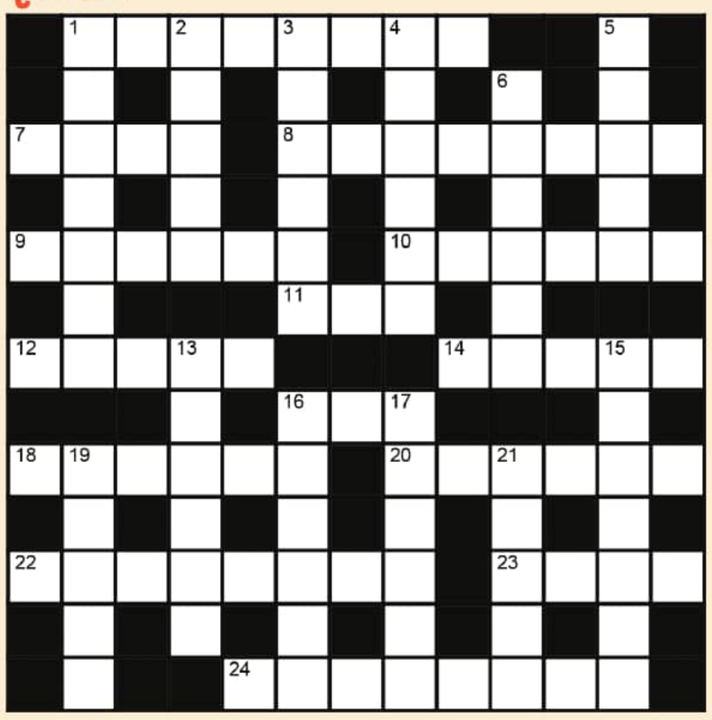
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Dealing with, controlling (8)
7 Therefore; hence (4)
8 Reticent (8)
9 Table of fixed charges and rates (6)
10 Petition or attraction (6)
11 A __ cry : a long way (3)
12 Part of the United Kingdom (5)
14 A muscle contraction (5)
16 Donkey (3)
18 ____ Seth : Author of "A Suitable Boy" (6)
20 Ms Chaudhary of Bollywood (6)
22 What you say when you are not impressed! (1,3,4)
23 Short Scottish dagger (4)
24 Taking no notice (8)

DOWN

1 State neighbouring New Delhi (7)
2 Supermodel ___ Campbell (5)
3 Release by exploding? (3,3)
4 Divine beverage (6)
5 Insect stage (5)
6 Increase or escalate (4,2)
13 Infuriate (6)
15 This cathedral in Bangalore is over 200 years old (2,5)
16 Unit of current (6)
17 Looked happy (6)
19 Inculcate (5)
21 Answer evasively (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: F EQUALS P

VWH FHEFCH DIO TH DIAH VE BECCEN I FIVW EB IJVQEX, TZV VWHO DIO XEV TH DIAH VE ZXAHKUVIXA QV.

Linemaro

I wish I were your coronary artery, so that I could be wrapped around your heart

Mindchow

Poetry is not an expression of the party line. It's that time of night, lying in bed, thinking what you really think, making the private world public, that's what the poet does

Joke of the day

'I liquidated my assets' is a better way of saying I spent my paycheck on booze

Loop

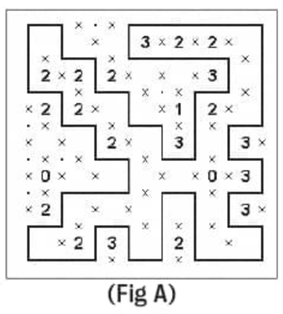
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

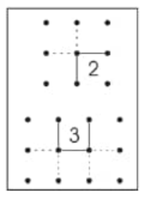
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

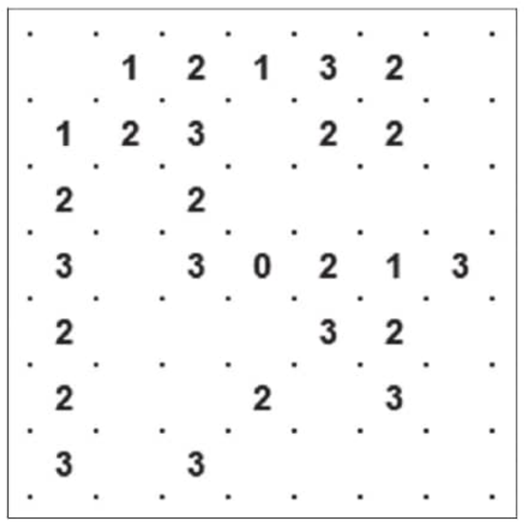
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



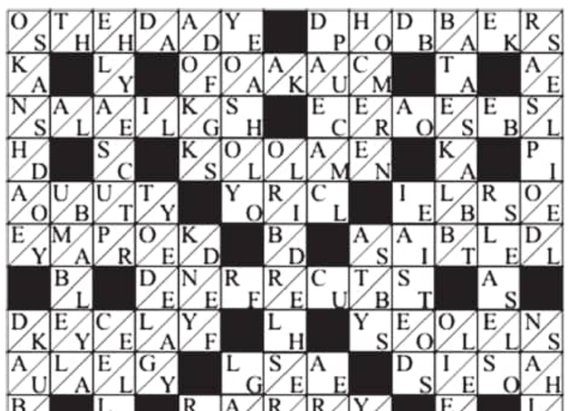
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



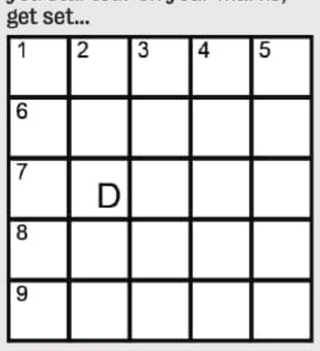
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Arcus; 6 Setae; 7 Slide; 8 Arian; 9 Girts

DOWN

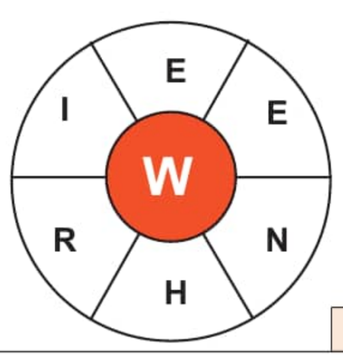
1 Tings; 2 Arced; 3 Ail I a; 4 Suers; 5 Tears

Mensapuzzle

Which number logically completes the grid?

3	1	5	5
7	2	1	3
6	5	4	9
8	3		4

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

10 Average; **11** Good; **13** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	8	1				2	6	
	7			4			1	
2			8		1			4
6	3						5	7
			1		4			
1	5						9	2
5			6		3			1
	1			8			2	
	4	9				6	3	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

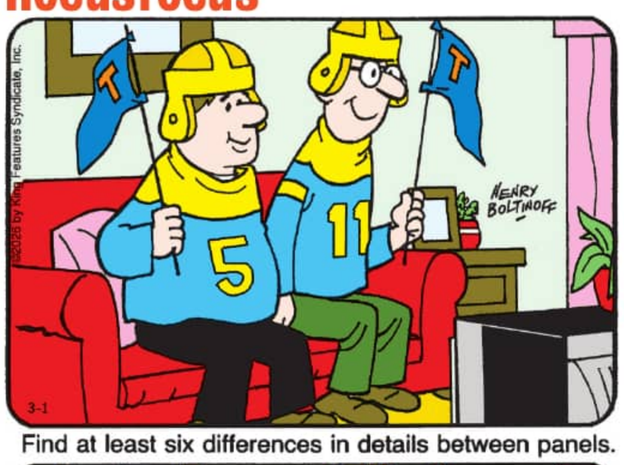
Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 11
3 5 6 9

Medium = 25
4 5 6 9

Hard = 19
5 7 8 9

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

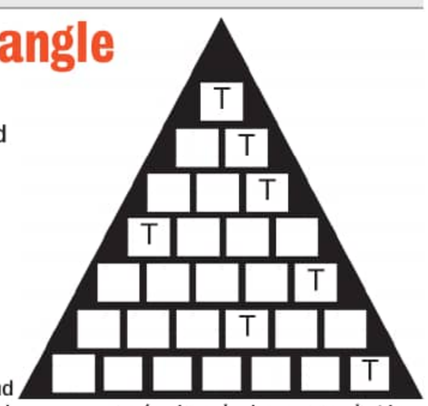
Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Pillow is moved. 3. Number is moved. 4. Drawer is smaller. 5. Frame is thinner. 6. Helmet is different.

Riddler

You are going to mail a letter, but the only information you have is listed below. What would his address be? WOOD JOHN MASS (In the US, this letter was actually delivered .... many years ago)

Alpha triangle

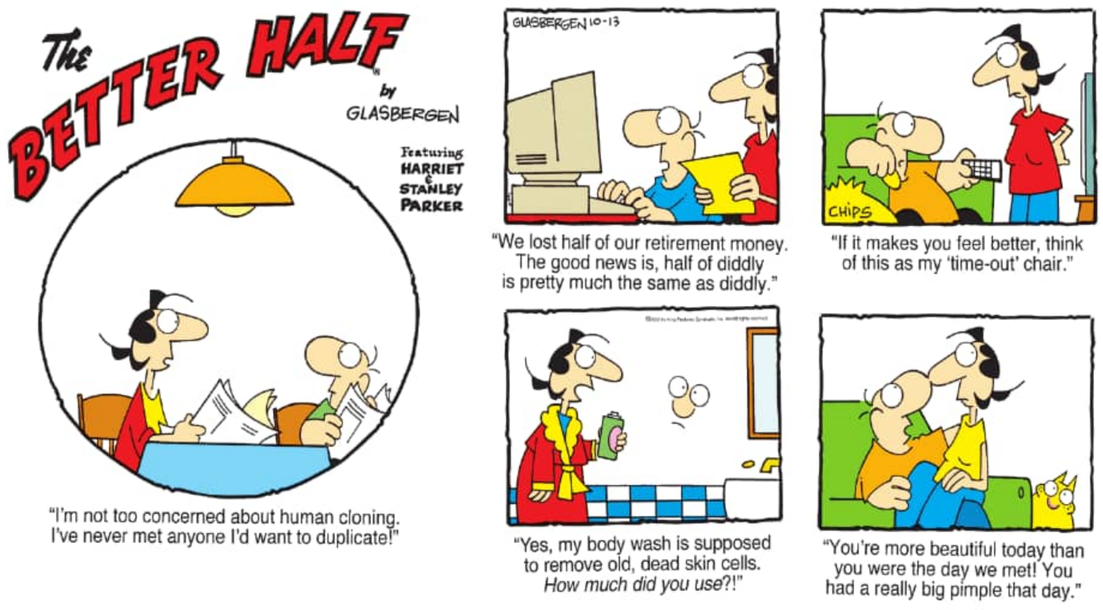
1 20th letter
2 tu Brute...
3 Fishermen's need
4 Adolescent
5 Occurrence
6 Aired
7 Plain or obvious

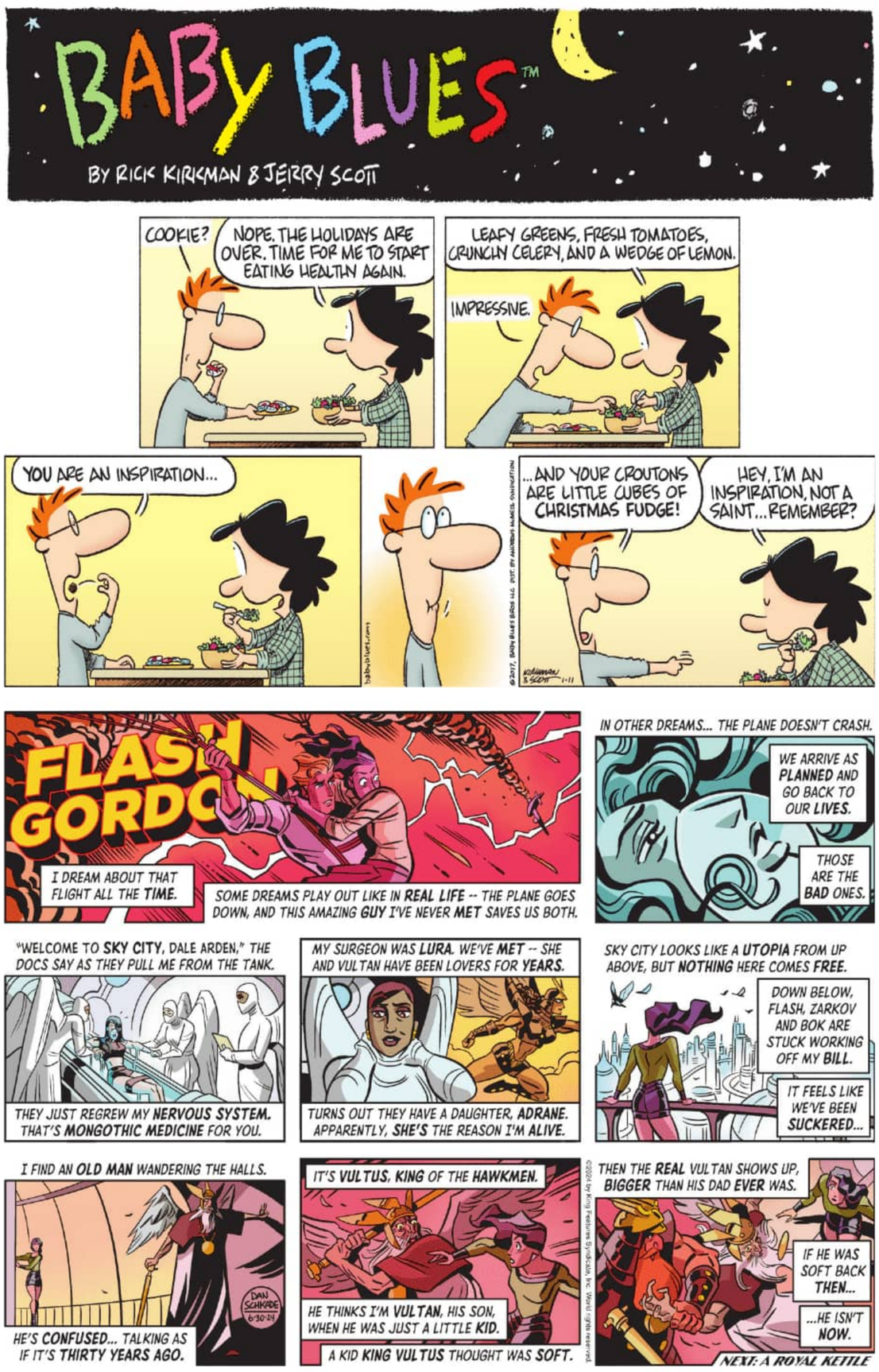


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS





WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

The sun enters a new phase, bringing vibrant energy to your domestic and family life. Professionally, starting a side hustle looks incredibly promising right now. Your finances are stable, but avoid lending money to acquaintances today. Love is nurturing and supportive, providing a safe haven from external stressors. Enhance your vitality by soaking in early morning sunlight.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Keeping expectations realistic today protects your peace and emotional wellbeing beautifully. Not everything unfolds exactly as imagined, and that is perfectly okay. Staying grounded helps you appreciate what truly matters without unnecessary disappointment or frustration arising.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today encourages learning, curiosity, and expanding your skills beyond familiar territory confidently. Staying open-minded helps you gain valuable knowledge and fresh perspectives naturally. Continuous growth strengthens your confidence while giving you advantages professionally and personally ahead.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Focus and concentration become especially important today, particularly regarding work and important responsibilities. Too many distractions may reduce productivity unnecessarily. Finding a quiet environment helps you think clearly, stay efficient, and accomplish tasks successfully without interruptions.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Your goals remain achievable today, though greater effort and planning are required this time around. Hard work teaches valuable lessons while building stronger foundations for success. Organizing responsibilities carefully helps your ambitions move steadily toward reality beautifully.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Strong emotions and frustration may rise quickly today, making patience and self-control especially important around others. Taking space for yourself helps avoid unnecessary conflict beautifully. Quiet reflection and calm surroundings restore emotional balance and inner peace naturally.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Creative ideas flow strongly today, though unfinished responsibilities still deserve your full attention first. Writing new inspirations down helps preserve them beautifully for later. Completing current tasks before starting fresh projects keeps your progress organized and steady.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Hidden talents and abilities deserve recognition today instead of remaining quietly unnoticed by others. Sharing your skills confidently helps break routine and attract appreciation naturally. Taking credit for your strengths opens exciting opportunities and professional growth ahead.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Personal information shared carelessly today could easily be misunderstood or misused by others later. Staying selective about who you trust protects your emotional wellbeing beautifully. Thoughtful boundaries help maintain security, privacy, and stronger personal relationships naturally now.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
A serious and ambitious mindset helps you stay highly focused on work and long-term goals today. Others may try distracting you, though determination keeps you productive beautifully. Remaining disciplined helps your efforts create impressive progress and recognition.

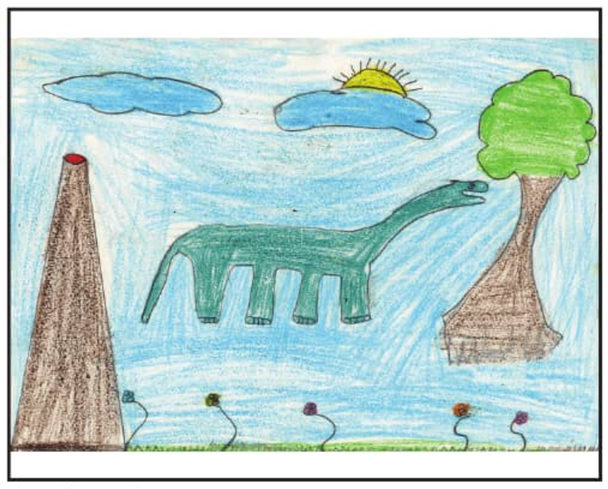
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Stepping back and allowing others to contribute today helps reduce unnecessary pressure and exhaustion. You do not need carrying every responsibility alone constantly. Focusing only on your own tasks preserves energy while maintaining healthier professional boundaries beautifully.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Your charm, positivity, and people-pleasing nature attract admiration from nearly everyone around you today. Showcasing your talents confidently leaves strong impressions naturally. Others appreciate your warmth, enthusiasm, and uplifting energy throughout every interaction and situation beautifully.

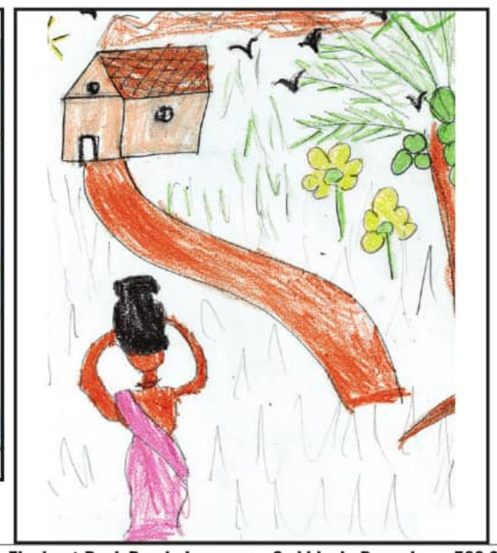
Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Teamwork becomes especially important today as leadership and collaboration skills are tested meaningfully. Sharing ideas openly while respecting different perspectives helps create success naturally. Staying flexible, communicative, and supportive allows group efforts to flourish beautifully now.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Visweth, Bengaluru



Gaurav, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
2202984400÷60÷60÷24÷365= 7 years

BULL'S EYE
ewer, hewn, newer, renew, were, wren, when, where, WHERE IN, whine, whiner, wine, wire,

FAST FIVE

S	C	A	U	R
T	E	A	S	E
I	D	L	E	S
N	A	I	R	A
G	R	I	S	T

RIDDLER
It was delivered to: John Underwood Andover, Mass.

STRIKE OUT

S	T	E	A	D	Y	■	D	O	B	B	E	R	■	A
A	■	Y	■	O	A	K	U	M	■	A	■	A	■	A
S	L	E	I	G	H	■	C	E	A	S	E	S	■	P
H	■	C	■	S	O	L	A	N	■	A	■	P	■	■
A	B	U	T	■	O	I	L	■	E	L	S	E	D	■
Y	A	P	O	K	■	B	■	S	A	T	E	D	■	■
■	B	■	D	E	F	E	C	T	S	■	A	■	■	■
D	E	C	A	F	■	L	■	Y	E	L	L	S	■	■
A	L	L	Y	■	G	E	E	■	D	I	S	H	■	■
B	■	A	■	S	O	R	R	Y	■	N	■	I	■	■
B	A	M	A	K	O	■	R	E	C	E	D	E	■	■
L	O	■	I	D	I	O	T	■	R	■	L	■	■	■
E	G	R	E	T	S	■	R	I	N	S	E	D	■	■

QUICK

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
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■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE
2. In rows multiply the far left number by the far right to give the 2 digit result, written in the central squares.

QUOTE UNCODE
The people may be made to follow a path of action, but they may not be made to understand it.

SUDOKU

8	4	9	7	1	2	6	3	5
3	1	6	4	8	5	7	2	9
5	2	7	6	9	3	8	4	1
1	5	8	3	6	4	9	2	7
7	9	2	1	5	4	3	8	6
6	3	4	9	2	8	1	5	7
2	6	5	8	3	1	9	7	4
9	7	3	2	4	6	5	1	8
4	8	1	5	7	9	2	6	3

ALPHA TRIANGLE
T, Et, Net, Teen, Event, Vented, Evident.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 + 3 − 6 + 5 = 11
Medium
5 × 6 + 4 − 9 = 25
Hard
7 + 8 − 5 + 9 = 19

LOOP

KAKURO

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 # In touch
Pax Jolie-Pitt attends cousin's engagement celebration with Brad Pitt's family

Big plans

Priyanka teases next film with Angelina Jolie

Priyanka Chopra will soon be seen on the big screen in 'Varanasi', one of India's biggest and most expensive films. While gearing up for its release, the actress, in her latest interview, spilled the beans about her upcoming work projects, including her international ventures. While the star is expected to soon begin work on her next with Orlando Bloom, she teased a new project on the cards.

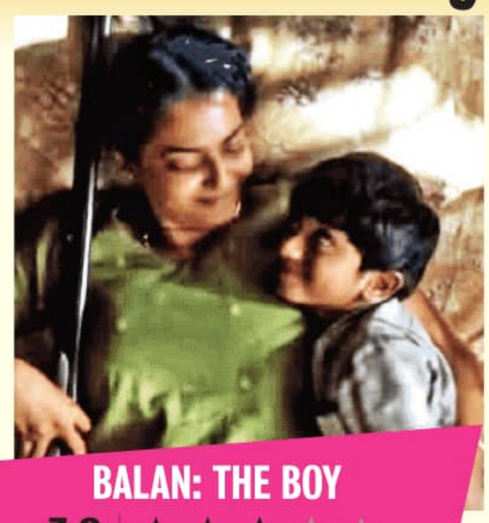
Speaking to Fortune India about her future plans, Chopra disclosed that she will be working with Angelina Jolie on a project. However, she stopped short of sharing any details about whether the project will be a film, advertising or philanthropic gig.

Priyanka also named Jolie among a group of women in Hollywood she finds particularly 'inspiring'. Alongside the Oscar-winning star, she picked actresses Penélope Cruz and Salma Hayek as fellow actors and friends whose careers she admires.

Priyanka is currently filming the final few schedules of SS Rajamouli's 'Varanasi', a project she described as one of the most ambitious undertakings of her career. "What we are trying to do is something so ambitious and of a scale not seen for a very long time. I am very privileged and excited not just for India but also the world, because this will be a massive global release and people will be exposed to what we have been working on for the past three years," Chopra said.

—ETimes

Poignant mother-son story



BALAN: THE BOY

3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆

- **DIRECTOR** Chidambaram
- **ACTORS** Farzana Palathingal, Adhiseshan KR, Muhamed Zinaan, Jean Paul Lal, Girish AD, and Tovino Thomas
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 147 minutes

Director Chidambaram, famous for Manjummel Boys, has done a fantastic job with narrating a moving mother-son story. The movie explores how a single mother goes to any extent to protect her son. The pre-intermission session will keep the audiences hooked. The second-half is a bit slow. The movie would have been much better had the director avoided a few scenes where the protagonist works at a bar with Abbas, a drug-peddler. However, cinematography, background score and the locations add value to the movie. The director seems to focus on the popular theme – survival of the fittest – but he never indulges in bloodshed throughout the movie.

The movie begins at a prison in Kannur where Amma (Farzana Palathingal) is serving a term for murder. Amma is seen taking care of her son (Adhiseshan). Meanwhile, a woman prisoner, with an evil intention, arranges bail for Amma. After being released from the prison, Amma and her son try to settle down with different identities, but people try to block their attempts. Finally, Amma is assigned to look after an elderly woman. She decides to settle down at the bungalow with a different identity (Sherly). At this juncture, the woman, who helped Amma to get of prison, appears on the scene and insists that she become a call girl. Amma, with no other option, eliminates her. You have to watch the movie to know whether or not Amma and her son lead life without any hurdles.

The actors have done a good job. Farazana Palathingal walks away with all honours for her sterling performance. As a hapless woman who is compelled to kill her 'husband' and as a single mother who struggles to look after her son, she is convincing. Adhiseshan has entered into the skin of the character. Muhamed Zinaan, who portrays the grown-up protagonist, has acted well.

The movie is worth a watch for those who love plot-oriented movies. **—Y Maheswara Reddy**

Solace by the sea: Taapsee picks up thoughts

Actress Taapsee Pannu posted a soulful beachside moment, sharing that she is "picking up some thoughts".

The actress, who made her acting debut with the 2010 Telugu film Jhummandi Naadam, shared a string of images dressed in a vibrant mustard-yellow coordinated outfit and enjoying a quiet walk along the shoreline.

For the caption, the actress wrote: "Picking up some thoughts to share with you all soon."

Talking about her work, the 38-year-old actress, who is married to Danish badminton player and Olympic medalist Mathias Boe, was recently seen in the gripping courtroom drama titled Assi directed by Anubhav Sinha.

The film is a, which centers on unexplained sexual assault cases. An investigator and defense team fight to reveal shocking truths hidden beneath statistics and uncover the human cost behind the headlines.

She will next be seen in "Gandhari".

"Gandhari" promises a riveting storyline filled with relentless determination and intense personal stakes, set against the backdrop of gripping mystery and high-powered action. Audiences will see Taapsee Pannu as a fierce mom on a mission," reads the plot description from streaming giant Netflix,reports variety.com.

"Gandhari", which also stars Ishwak Singh marks Kanika Dhillon and Taapsee's sixth collaboration after back-to-back success with "Manmarziyaan", "Haseen Dilruba", "Phir Aayi Hasseen Dilruba" and many more.

Tapasee stepped into Hindi film with the comedy Chashme Baddoor in 2013. It was directed by David Dhawan.

—IANS

Snub to exes, love to Trudeau

Singer Katy Perry appeared to take a playful swipe at former partners Orlando Bloom and John Mayer while showing affection for her current boyfriend, former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, during a recent concert in Spain, according to E! News.

According to fan-captured footage from her performance at the O Son do Camino music festival in Santiago de Compostela, Perry incorporated references to several former partners into a stage segment during her performance of her 2020 hit song "Never Really Over."

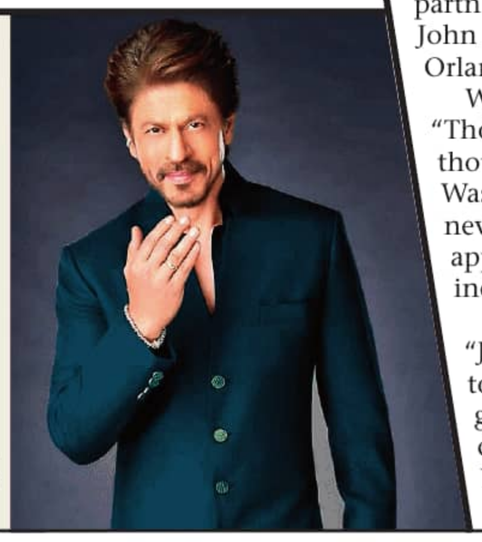
As part of the performance, the 41-year-old singer danced in front of a giant mock iPhone screen displaying fictional incoming calls from contacts believed to represent some of her former partners, including musician John Mayer, DJ Diplo and actor Orlando Bloom.

While singing the lyrics, "Thought we kissed goodbye / thought we meant this time / Was the last / but I guess it's never really over," Perry appeared to reject the incoming calls one by one.

The first call came from "JM," seemingly a reference to Mayer, accompanied by a guitar emoji. Perry then declined another call believed to represent Diplo.

The singer also appeared to reference Bloom, her former fiance and the father of her daughter Daisy Dove Bloom. However, the mood shifted when the initials "JPJT". Unlike the previous calls, Perry repeatedly pressed the green answer button. **—ANI**

On the dance floor



Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan brought his signature charm to the pre-wedding celebrations of Revati Sule, daughter of Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule. Revati is all set to tie the knot with Sarang Lakhani, whose father Arun Lakhani is a well-known businessman and politician from Nagpur. Several videos from the festivities have been making the rounds on social media.

A viral video from the celebration shows SRK sharing a warm and heartfelt moment with the couple on stage. He lovingly embraced bride-to-be Revati and wished the couple well. In a sweet gesture that left everyone charmed, he also planted a kiss on groom-to-be Sarang's cheek before pulling both of them into a warm hug, much to the delight of everyone present. He also took over the dance floor as he grooved to his hit number 'Koi Mil Gaya' from 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', sending the crowd into a frenzy. Dressed sharply in a black outfit and sporting a new hairstyle from the sets of his upcoming film 'King'.

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